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THE  
HISTORY  
OF  
MEXICO.

COLLECTED FROM  
SPANISH AND MEXICAN HISTORIANS,  
(FROM MANUSCRIPTS, AND  
ANCIENT PAINTINGS OF THE INDIANS.)

TOGETHER WITH THE  
CONQUEST OF MEXICO

BY  
*THE SPANIARDS,*  
(ILLUSTRATED BY ENGRAVINGS.)

WITH  
CRITICAL DISSERTATIONS  
ON THE  
LAND, ANIMALS, AND INHABITANTS OF MEXICO.

By Abbé D. FRANCESCO SAVERIO CLAVIGERO.

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TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL ITALIAN,  
BY CHARLES CULLEN, ESQ.

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IN THREE VOLUMES.

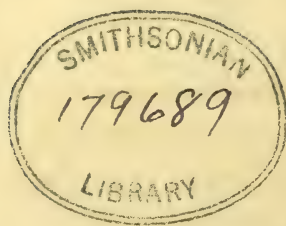
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THE  
HISTORY  
OF  
MEXICO.

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B O O K VI.

*The Religion of the Mexicans: namely, their Gods, Temples, Priests, Sacrifices, and Offerings: their Fasts and Austerities, their Chronology, Calendar, and Festivals; their Ceremonies upon the Birth of Children, at Marriages, and Funerals.*

THE religion, government, and œconomy of a state are the three things which chiefly form the character of a nation, and without being acquainted with these, it is impossible to have a perfect idea of the genius, dispositions, and knowledge of any people whatever. The religion of the Mexicans, of which we are to give an account in this book, was a heap of errors, of superstitions, and cruel rites. Such weaknesses of the human mind, of which we have had but too many examples even in the most enlightened nations of antiquity, are inseparable



from every religion that takes its source in the fantastical imaginations and fears of mankind. If we compare, as we shall do in another place, the religion of the Greeks and Romans with that of the Mexicans, we shall find the former more superstitious and ridiculous, the latter more cruel. These celebrated nations of ancient Europe, from the unfavourable opinion which they entertained of the power of their gods, multiplied their number to excess, confined their influence within narrow bounds, imputed to them the most atrocious crimes, and stained their worship with the most scandalous impurities; for which they have been justly reproached by the advocates of Christianity. The Mexicans imagined their gods more perfect, and in their worship, however superstitious it might be, there was nothing repugnant to decency.

The Mexicans had some idea, though a very imperfect one, of a supreme, absolute, and independent Being, to whom they acknowledged to owe fear and adoration. They represented him in no external form, because they believed him to be invisible; and named him only by the common appellation of God, in their language *Teotl*, a word resembling still more in its meaning than in its pronunciation the *Theos* of the Greeks: but they applied to him certain epithets which were highly expressive of the grandeur and power which they conceived him to possess. They called him *Ipalnemoani*, that is, He by whom we live; and *Tlòque Nahuàque*, He who has all in himself. But their knowledge and worship of this supreme Being was obscured and in a manner lost in the crowd of deities invented by their superstition.

They believed in an evil spirit, the enemy of mankind, which they called *Tlacatecolotl*, or Rational Owl, and  
said

said that he often appeared to men for the purpose of terrifying or doing them an injury.

With respect to the soul, the barbarous *Otomies*, as they tell us, believed that it died together with the body: while the Mexicans, with all the other polished nations of Anahuac, considered it as immortal; allowing, at the same time, that blessing of immortality to the souls of brutes, and not restraining it to rational beings alone (*a*).

They distinguished three places for the souls when separated from the body. Those of soldiers who died in battle or in captivity among their enemies, and those of women who died in labour, went to the house of the sun, whom they considered as the Prince of Glory, where they led a life of endless delight; where, every day, at the first appearance of the sun's rays they hailed his birth with rejoicings; and with dancing, and the music of instruments and of voices, attended him to his meridian; there they met the souls of the women, and with the same festivity accompanied him to his setting. If religion is intended only to serve the purposes of government, as has been imagined by most of the free-thinkers of our times, surely those nations could not forge a system of belief better calculated to inspire their soldiers with courage than one which promised so high a reward after their death. They next supposed that these spirits after four years of that glorious life, went to animate clouds, and birds of beautiful feathers and of sweet song; but always at liberty to rise again to heaven, or to descend upon the earth to warble and suck the flowers. The people of Tlascala believed that the souls of persons of rank went, after their death, to inhabit the bodies of beautiful and sweet

(*a*) The ideas here ascribed to the Mexicans, with respect to the souls of brutes, will appear more fully when we shall come to speak of their funeral rites.



sweet finging birds, and those of the nobler quadrupeds ; while the souls of inferior persons were supposed to pass into weazles, beetles, and such other meaner animals. Whence we see that the absurd system of the Pythagorean transmigration, which has been so firmly settled, and so widely propagated throughout the countries of the East, has not wanted its advocates in those of the West (b). The souls of those that were drowned, or struck by lightning, of those who died by dropsy, tumors, wounds, and other such diseases, went, as the Mexicans believed, along with the souls of children, at least of those which were sacrificed to *Tlaloc* the god of water, to a cool and delightful place, called *Tlalocan*, where that god resided, and where they were to enjoy the most delicious repasts, with every other kind of pleasure. In the inner part of the greater temple of Mexico there was a particular place where they supposed that on a certain day of the year all the children which had been sacrificed to *Tlaloc*, came, and invisibly assisted at the ceremony. The *Miztecas* had a persuasion, that a great cavern in a lofty mountain, in their province, was the entrance into paradise ; and their nobles and great men, therefore, always took care to be buried near the cavern, in order to be nearer that place of delight. Lastly, the third place allotted for the souls of those who suffered any other kind of death, was the *Micltlan*, or hell, which they conceived to be a place of utter darkness, in which reigned a god, called *Micltlanteuctli* (lord of hell), and a goddess

(b) Who would believe that a system so preposterous and improbable as that of the Pythagorean transmigration, should be supported by a philosopher of the enlightened eighteenth century. Yet it has been seriously maintained, lately, by a Frenchman, in a book printed at Paris, under the title of "The Year Two thousand four hundred and forty."

goddess named *Mictlancihuatl*. I am of opinion that they believed hell to be a place in the centre of the earth (c); but they did not imagine that the souls underwent any other punishment there than what they suffered from the darkness of their abode.

The Mexicans, with all other civilized nations, had a clear tradition, though somewhat corrupted by fable, of the creation of the world, of the universal deluge, of the confusion of tongues, and of the dispersion of the people; and had actually all these events represented in their pictures (d). They said, that when mankind were overwhelmed with the deluge, none were preserved but a man called *Coxcox* (to whom others give the name of *Teocipactli*), and a woman called *Xochiquetzal*, who saved themselves in a little bark, and having afterwards got to land upon a mountain called by them *Colhuacan*, had there a great many children: that these children were all born dumb, until a dove from a lofty tree imparted to them languages, but differing so much that they could not understand one another. The Tlascalans pretended that the men who survived the deluge were transformed into apes, but recovered speech and reason by degrees (e).

Among

(c) Dr. Siguenza was of opinion, that the Mexicans placed hell in the northern part of the earth; as the same word *Mictlampa*, signified *towards the North*, and *towards Hell*. But, I rather think they placed it in the centre, for that is the meaning of the name of *Tlalxicco*, which they gave to the temple of the god of hell. After all it is possible that the Mexicans themselves might hold different opinions upon the subject.

(d) Their idea of the deluge appears from the representation in the plate annexed, which is copied from an original painting of the Mexicans.

(e) For an account of the opinions of the Miztecas and other nations of America, with respect to the creation of the world, I must refer the reader to Father Gregorio Garcia, a Dominican, in his work entitled, *The Origin of the Indians*.



Among all the deities worshipped by the Mexicans, and which were very numerous, although not near so much so as those of the Romans, there were *thirteen* principal and greater gods, in honour of whom they consecrated that number. We shall give an account of what we have found in the Mexican mythology with respect to these and the other gods, without regard to the pompous conjectures and absurd system of Cav. Boturini.

*Tezcatlipoca.* This was the greatest god adored in these countries, after the invisible God, or supreme Being, whom we have already mentioned. His name means *Shining Mirror*, from one that was affixed to his image. He was the god of providence, the soul of the world, the creator of heaven and earth, and master of all things. They represented him always young, to denote that no length of years ever diminished his power; they believed that he rewarded with various benefits the just, and punished the wicked with diseases and other afflictions. They placed stone seats in the corners of the streets, for that god to rest upon when he chose it, and upon which no person was ever allowed to sit down. Some said, that he had descended from heaven by a rope made of spiders webs, and had persecuted and driven from these countries, the grand priest of Tula *Quetzalcoatl*, who was afterwards consecrated as a god.

His principal image was of *teotetl* (divine stone) which is a black shining stone like black marble, and was richly dressed. It had golden ear-rings, and from the under lip hung a crystal tube, within which was a green feather, or a turquoise stone, which at first sight appeared to be a gem. His hair was tied with a golden string, from the end of which hung an ear of the same metal,  
with

with the appearance of ascending smoke painted on it, by which they intended to represent the prayers of the distressed. The whole breast was covered with massy gold. He had bracelets of gold upon both his arms, an emerald in the navel, and in his left hand a golden fan, set round with beautiful feathers, and polished like a mirror, in which they imagined he saw every thing that happened in the world. At other times to denote his justice, they represented him sitting on a bench covered with a red cloth, upon which were drawn the figures of skulls, and other bones of the dead : upon his left arm a shield with four arrows, and his right lifted in the attitude of throwing a spear : his body dyed black, and his head crowned with quail-feathers.

*Ometeuctli* and *Omecibuatl* (*f*). The former was a god, and the latter a goddess, who they pretended dwelt in a magnificent city in heaven, abounding with delights, and there watched over the world, and gave to mortals their wishes : *Ometeuctli* to men, and *Omecibuatl* to women. They had a tradition that this goddess having had many children in heaven, was delivered of a knife of flint ; upon which her children in a rage threw it to the earth, from which when it fell, sprung sixteen hundred heroes, who, knowing their high origin, and having no servants, all mankind having perished in a general calamity, (*g*) agreed to send an embassy to their mother, to intreat her to grant them power to create men to serve them. The mother answered, that if they had more exalted sentiments, they would have made themselves

worthy

(*f*) They likewise gave these gods the names of *Citlallatonac*, and *Citlalicuti*, upon account of the stars.

(*g*) These people, as we shall mention in another place, believed that the earth had suffered three great universal calamities by which all mankind had been destroyed.

worthy to live with her eternally in heaven : but since they chose to abide upon the earth, she desired them to go to *Micllanteuētlī*, god of hell, and ask of him one of the bones of the men that had died ; to sprinkle this with their own blood, and from it they would have a man and a woman who would afterwards multiply. At the same time she warned them to be upon their guard against *Micllanteuētlī*, who after giving the bone might suddenly repent. With these instructions from his mother, *Xolotl*, one of the heroes, went to hell, and after obtaining what he sought, began to run towards the upper surface of the earth : upon which *Micllanteuētlī* enraged pursued him, but being unable to come up with him, returned to hell. *Xolotl* in his precipitate flight stumbled, and falling broke the bone into unequal pieces. Gathering them up again, he continued his course till he arrived at the place where his brothers awaited him ; when they put the fragments into a vessel, and sprinkled them with their blood which they drew from different parts of their bodies. Upon the fourth day they beheld a boy, and continuing to sprinkle with blood for three days more, a girl was likewise formed. They were both consigned to the care of *Xolotl* to be brought up, who fed them with the milk of the thistle. In that way, they believed the recovery of mankind was effected at that time. Thence took its rise, as they affirmed, the practice of drawing blood from different parts of the body, which as we shall see was so common among these nations : and they believed the differences in the stature of men to have been occasioned by the inequality of the pieces of the bone.

*Cihuacohuatl* (woman serpent) called likewise *Quilaztli*. This they believed to have been the first woman that



that had children in the world ; and she had always twins. She was esteemed a great goddess, and they said that she would frequently shew herself, carrying a child in a cradle upon her back.

*Tonatricli* and *Meztli*, names of the sun and moon, both deified by these nations. They said, that after the recovery and multiplication of mankind, each of the above mentioned heroes or demigods, had among the men, his servants and adherents : and that there being no sun, the one that had been, having come to an end, the heroes assembled in *Teotihuacan* around a great fire, and said to the men, that the first of them that should throw himself into the fire would have the glory to become a sun. Forthwith one of the men, more intrepid than the rest, called *Nanahuaztin*, threw himself into the flames, and descended to hell. In the interval while they all remained expecting the event, the heroes made wagers with the quails, locusts, and other animals, about the place of the sky where the sun would first appear ; and the animals being mistaken in their conjectures were immediately sacrificed. At length the sun arose in that quarter which from that time forward has been called the *Levant* ; but he had scarcely risen above the horizon when he stopped ; which the heroes perceiving, sent to desire him to continue his course. The sun replied, that he would not, until he should see them all put to death. The heroes were no less enraged than terrified by that answer : upon which one of them named *Citli*, taking his bow and three arrows, shot one at the sun ; but the sun saved himself by stooping. *Citli* aimed two other arrows, but in vain. The sun enraged turned back the last arrow, and fixed it in the forehead of *Citli*, who instantly expired. The rest intimidated by the fate of

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their brother, and unable to cope with the sun, resolved to die by the hands of *Xolotl*, who after killing all his brothers, put an end to his own life. The heroes before they died left their clothes to their servants; and since the conquest of these countries by the Spaniards, certain ancient garments have been found, which were preserved by the Indians with extraordinary veneration, under a belief that they had them by inheritance from those ancient heroes. The men were affected with great melancholy upon losing their masters; but *Tezcatlipoca* commanded one of them to go to the house of the sun, and from thence to bring music to celebrate his festival: he told him that for his journey which was to be by sea, he would prepare a bridge of whales and tortoises, and desired him to sing always as he went, a song which he gave him. This the Mexicans said, was the origin of the music and dancing with which they celebrated the festivals of their gods. They ascribed the daily sacrifice which they made of quails to the sun, to that which the heroes made of those birds; and the barbarous sacrifices of human victims, so common afterwards in these countries, they ascribed to the example of *Xolotl* with his brethren.

They told a similar fable of the origin of the moon. *Tezcociztecal*, another of those men who assembled in *Teotihuacan*, following the example of *Nanahuatzin*, threw himself into the fire: but the flames being somewhat less fierce, he turned out less bright, and was transformed into the moon. To these two deities they consecrated those two famous temples erected in the plain of *Teotihuacan*, of which we shall give an account in another place.

*Quetzalcoatl.*

*Quetzalcoatl*. (Feathered serpent.) This was among the Mexicans, and all the other nations of *Anahuac*, the god of the air. He was said to have once been high-priest of *Tula*. They figured him tall, big, and of a fair complexion, with an open forehead, large eyes, long black hair, and a thick beard. From a love of decency, he wore always a long robe; he was so rich that he had palaces of silver and precious stones; he was thought to possess the greatest industry, and to have invented the art of melting metals and cutting gems. He was supposed to have had the most profound wisdom, which he displayed in the laws which he left to mankind; and above all to have had the most rigid and exemplary manners. Whenever he intended to promulgate a law in his kingdom, he ordered a crier to the top of the mountain *Tzatzitepec* (the hill of shouting) near the city of *Tula*, whose voice was heard at the distance of three hundred miles. In his time, the corn grew so strong that a single ear was a load for a man: gourds were as long as a man's body: it was unnecessary to dye cotton, for it grew naturally of all colours: and all other fruits and seeds were in the same abundance and of extraordinary size. Then too there was an incredible number of beautiful and sweet singing birds. All his subjects were rich, and to sum up all in one word, the Mexicans imagined as much happiness under the priesthood of *Quetzalcoatl*, as the Greeks did under the reign of Saturn, whom this Mexican god likewise resembled in the exile which he suffered. Amidst all this prosperity, *Tezcatlipoca*, I know not for what reason, wishing to drive him from that country, appeared to him in the form of an old man, and told him that it was the will of the gods that he should be taken to the kingdom of *Tlapalla*. At the same time  
he



he offered him a beverage, which *Quetzalcoatl* readily accepted, in hopes of obtaining that immortality after which he aspired. He had no sooner drank it than he felt himself so strongly inclined to go to *Tlapalla*, that he set out immediately, accompanied by many of his subjects, who, on the way, entertained him with music. Near the city of *Quauhtitlan* he felled a tree with stones, which remained fixed in the trunk : and near *Tlalnepantla* he laid his hand upon a stone and left an impression, which the Mexicans shewed the Spaniards after the conquest. Upon his arrival at *Cholula*, the citizens detained him, and made him take upon him the government of their city. Besides the decency and sweetness of his manners, the aversion he shewed to all kinds of cruelty, insomuch that he could not bear to hear the very mention of war, added much to the affection entertained for him by the inhabitants of *Cholula*. To him they said they owed their knowledge of melting metals, their laws by which they were ever afterwards governed, the rites and ceremonies of their religion, and even, as some affirmed, the arrangement of their seasons and calendar.

After being twenty years in *Cholula*, he resolved to pursue his journey to the imaginary kingdom of *Tlapalla*, carrying along with him four noble and virtuous youths. In the maritime province of *Coatzacoalco*, he dismissed them, and desired them to assure the *Cholulans* that he would return to comfort and direct them. The *Cholulans* out of respect to their beloved *Quetzalcoatl*, put the reins of government into the hands of those young men. Some people said that he suddenly disappeared, others that he died upon that coast ; but, however it might be, *Quetzalcoatl* was consecrated as a god by the *Toltecas* of *Cholulan*, and made chief guardian of their city, in the  
centre

centre of which, in honour of him, they raised a great eminence and built a sanctuary upon it. Another eminence with a temple, was afterwards erected to him in *Tula*. From Cholula his worship was propagated over all that country, where he was adored as the god of the air. He had temples in Mexico, and elsewhere; and some nations, even enemies of the *Cholulans*, had, in the city of Cholula, temples and priests dedicated to his worship; and people came from all countries thither, to pay their devotions and to fulfil their vows. The Cholulans preserved with the highest veneration some small green stones, very well cut, which they said had belonged to him. The people of Yucatan boasted that their nobles were descended from him. Barren women offered up their prayers to him in order to become fruitful. His festivals were great and extraordinary, especially in Cholula, in the *Teoxibuitl*, or divine year; and were preceded by a severe fast of eighty days, and by dreadful austerities practised by the priests consecrated to his worship. Quetzalcoatl, they said, cleared the way for the god of water; because in these countries rain is generally preceded by wind.

Dr. Siguenza imagined that the *Quetzalcoatl*, deified by those people, was no other than the apostle St. Thomas, who announced to them the Gospel. He supported that opinion with great learning, in a work (*b*), which, with many other of his inestimable writings, has been unfortunately lost by the neglect of his heirs. In that work he instituted a comparison betwixt the names of *Didymos* and *Quetzalcoatl* (*i*), their dress, their doctrine, and

(*b*) This work of Siguenza is mentioned by Betancourt, in his *Mexican Theatre*; and by Dr. Eguiera, in his *Mexican Bibliotheca*.

(*i*) Betancourt observes, when he is comparing together the names of *Didymos* and

and their prophecies ; and examined the places through which they went, the traces which they left, and the miracles which their respective disciples related. As we have never seen the manuscript above mentioned, we shall avoid criticising an opinion to which we cannot subscribe, notwithstanding the respect which we bear for the great genius and extensive learning of the author.

Some Mexican writers are persuaded that the Gospel had been preached in America some centuries before the arrival of the Spaniards. The grounds of that opinion are some crosses (*k*) which have been found at different times, which seem to have been made before the arrival of the Spaniards : the fast of forty days observed by the people of the new world (*l*), the tradition of the future arrival

and *Quetzalcoatl*, that the latter is composed of *Coatl* a twin, and *Quetzalli* a gem; and that it signifies a Precious Twin. But Torquemada, who perfectly understood the Mexican language, and had those names interpreted to him by the ancient people, says that *Quetzalcoatl* means, serpent furnished with feathers. In fact, *Coatl* does perfectly signify *serpent*, and *Quetzalli*, *green-feather*, and have been applied to *twin* and *gem*, only metaphorically.

(*k*) The crosses the most celebrated are those of Yucatan, of Mizteca, Queretaro, Tepique, and Tianquiztepec. Those of Yucatan are mentioned by Father Cogolludo, a Franciscan, in his History, book ii. chap. 12. The cross of Mizteca is taken notice of by Boturini in his work, and in the chronicle of Father Burgoa, a Dominican. There is an account of the cross of Queretaro, written by a Franciscan of the college of *Propaganda* in that city; and of that of Tepique by the learned Jesuit Sigismund Tarabal, whose manuscripts are preserved in the Jesuit college of Guadalajara. That of Tianquiztepec was discovered by Boturini, and is mentioned in his work. The crosses of Yucatan were worshipped by the Yucatenese, in obedience, as they said, to the instructions of their great prophet *Chilam-Cambal*, who desired that when a certain race of men with beards should arrive in that country from the East, and should be seen to adore that sign, they should embrace the doctrine of those strangers. We shall have an opportunity of speaking more particularly concerning these monuments, in the *Ecclesiastical History of Mexico*, if Heaven vouchsafe to favour our design.

(*l*) The fast of forty days proves nothing, as those nations likewise observed fasts of three, four, five, twenty, eighty, a hundred and sixty days, and even of four years; nor was that of forty days, by any means the most common.



arrival of a strange people, with beards, and the prints of human feet impressed upon some stones, which are supposed to be the footsteps of the apostle St. Thomas (*m*). We never could reconcile ourselves to this opinion; but the examination of such monuments and remains, would require a work of a very different kind from that which we have undertaken.

*Tlaloc*, otherwise *Tlalocateuctli* (master of paradise), was the god of water. They called him fertilizer of the earth, and protector of their temporal goods. They believed he resided upon the highest mountains, where the clouds are generally formed, such as those of *Tlaloc*, *Tlascala*, and *Toluca*; whither they often went to implore his protection.

The native historians relate, that the *Acolhuas* having arrived in that country in the time of *Xolotl*, the first Chechemecan king, found at the top of the mountain of *Tlaloc*, an image of that god, made of a white and very light stone, in the shape of a man sitting upon a square stone, with a vessel before him, in which was some elastic gum, and a variety of seeds. This was their yearly offering, by way of rendering up their thanks after having had a favourable harvest. That image was reckoned the oldest in that country; for it had been placed upon that hill by the ancient Toltecas, and remained till the end of the XVth or beginning of the XVIth century, when *Nezahualpilli*, king of *Acolhuacan*, in order to gain the favour of his subjects, carried it away, and placed another in its stead, of a very hard black stone.

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(*m*) Not only the marks of human feet have been found printed or rather cut out in stones, but those likewise of animals have been found, without our being able to form any conjecture of the purpose had in view by those who have taken the trouble to cut them.

The new image, however, being defaced by lightning, and the priests declaring it to be a punishment from heaven, the ancient statue was restored, and there continued to be preserved and worshipped, until the promulgation of the Gospel, when it was thrown down and broken by the order of the first bishop of Mexico.

The ancients also believed that in all the high mountains there resided other gods, subaltern to Tlaloc. They all went under the same name, and were revered, not only as gods of water, but also as the gods of mountains. The image of *Tlaloc* was painted blue and green, to express the different colours that are observed in water. He held in his hand a rod of gold, of an undulated and pointed form, by which they intended to denote the lightning. He had a temple in Mexico, within the inclosure of the greater temple, and the Mexicans celebrated several festivals in honour to him every year.

Chalchiuhcueje, otherwise *Chalchibuitlicue*, the goddess of water, and companion of Tlaloc. She was known by some other very expressive names (*n*), which either signify the effects which water produces, or the different appearances and colours which it assumes in motion. The Tlascalans called her *Matlalcueje*, that is, clothed in a green robe; and they gave the same name to the highest mountain of Tlascala, on whose summit are formed those stormy clouds which generally burst over the city of Angelopoli. To that summit the Tlascalans ascended to perform their sacrifices, and offer up their prayers. This is the very same goddess of water,

to

(*n*) *Apozonallotl* and *Acuecuejotl* express the swelling and fluctuation of water: *Atlacamani*, storms excited on it: *Abuic* and *Aiaub*, its motions sometimes to one side and sometimes to another: *Xixiquipilibui*, the alternate rising and falling of the waves, &c.

to whom Torquemada gives the name of *Xochiquetzal*, and the Cav. Boturini that of *Macuilxochiquetzalli*.

Xiuhtecuċtli (master of the year and of the grafs), was among these nations the god of fire, to whom they likewise gave the name of *Ixcozauhqui*, which expresses the colour of fire. This god was greatly revered in the Mexican empire. At their dinner they made an offering to him of the first morsel of their food, and the first draught of their beverage, by throwing both into the fire; and burned incense to him at certain times of the day. In honour of him they held two fixed festivals of the most solemn kind, one in the tenth, and another in the eighteenth month; and one moveable feast at which they created the usual magistrates, and renewed the ceremony of the investiture of the fiefs of the kingdom. He had a temple in Mexico, and some other palaces.

Centeotl, goddess of the earth and of corn, called likewise, *Tonacajobua* (o), that is, she who supports us. She had five temples in Mexico, and three festivals were held on her account, in the third, eighth, and eleventh months: she was particularly revered and honoured by the Totonacas, who esteemed her to be their chief protectress; and erected to her, upon the top of a high mountain, a temple, where she was served by a great number of priests solely devoted to her worship, and adored by the whole nation. They had an extraordinary love for her, being persuaded that she did not require human victims, but was contented with the sacrifice of doves, quails, leverets, and such animals, which they offered up to her in great numbers. They expected

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(o) They gave her likewise the names of *Tzintecotl* (original goddess), *Xilonen*, *Ixtacacuecoteotl* and *Tlatlaubquicenteotl*, changing her name according to the different states of the grain in the progress of its growth.



she was at last to deliver them from the cruel slavery they were under to the other gods, who constrained them to sacrifice so many human creatures. The Mexicans entertained very different sentiments of her, shedding a great deal of human blood at her festivals. In the above mentioned temple of the Totonacas, was one of the most renowned oracles of the country.

*Mictlanteuctli*, the god of hell, and *Mictlancihuatl* his female companion, were much honoured by the Mexicans. These deities were imagined to dwell in a place of great darkness in the bowels of the earth. They had a temple in Mexico, in which they held a festival in the eighteenth month. Sacrifices and offerings were made to them by night, and the chief minister of their worship was a priest called *Tlillantlenamacac*, who was always dyed of a black colour, in order to perform the functions of his priesthood.

*Joalteuctli*, the god of night, who seems to us to have been the same with *Meztli* or the moon. Some think him the same with *Tonatiuh*, or the sun, while others imagine him to have been quite a distinct deity. They recommended their children to this god, to give them sleep.

*Joalticiti* (nightly physician), goddess of cradles; to whom they likewise recommended their children to be taken care of, particularly in the night time.

*Huitzilopochtli*, or *Mexitli*, was the god of war; the deity the most honoured by the Mexicans, and their chief protector (*p*). Of this god some said he was a pure spirit,

(*p*) *Huitzilopochtli* is a compound of two words, viz. *Huitzilin*, the humming bird, and *Opochtli*, left. It was so called from his image having the feathers of the little bird upon its left foot. Boturini knowing little of the Mexi-

spirit, others that he was born of a woman, but without the assistance of a man, and described his birth in the following manner. There lived, said they, in Coatepec, a place near to the ancient city of Tula, a woman called *Coatlicue*, mother of the *Ceutzonhuiznabuis*, who was extremely devoted to the worship of the gods. One day as she was employed, according to her usual custom, in walking in the temple, she beheld descending in the air, a ball made of various feathers. She seized it and kept it in her bosom, intending afterwards to employ the feathers in decoration of the altar; but when she wanted it after her walk was at an end, she could not find it, at which she was extremely surprised, and her wonder was very greatly increased when she began to perceive from that moment that she was pregnant. Her pregnancy advanced till it was discovered by her children, who, although they could not themselves suspect their mother's virtue, yet fearing the disgrace she would suffer upon her delivery, determined to prevent it by putting her to death. They could not take their resolution so secretly as to conceal it from their mother, who while she was in deep affliction at the thoughts of dying by the hands of her own children, heard an unexpected voice issue from her womb, saying, "Be not afraid mother, for I shall save you with the greatest honour to yourself, and glory to me." Her hard-hearted sons, guided and encouraged by their sister *Cojolxauhqui*, who had been the most keenly bent

can language, derives the name from *Huitziton* the leader of the Mexicans in their pilgrimage, and takes this leader and the god to have been the same person. Besides that such an etymology is over-strained, that pretended identity is quite unknown to the Mexicans themselves, who when they began their pilgrimage under the conduct of Huitziton, had long before, from time immemorial, worshipped the god of war: the Spaniards being unable to pronounce the word, called him *Huiebilobos*.

bent upon the deed, were now just upon the point of executing their purpose, when Huitzilopochtli was born, with a shield in his left hand, a spear in his right, and a crest of green feathers on his head; his left leg adorned with feathers, and his face, arms, and thighs streaked with blue lines. As soon as he came into the world he displayed a twisted pine, and commanded one of his soldiers called *Tochanalqui*, to fell with it *Cojolxauhqui*, as the one who had been the most guilty; and he himself attacked the rest with so much fury that, in spite of their efforts, their arms, or their intreaties, he killed them all, plundered their houses, and presented the spoils to his mother. Mankind were so terrified by this event, that from that time they called him *Tetzabuitl*, terror, and *Tetzauhteotl*, terrible god.

This was the god who, as they said, becoming the protector of the Mexicans, conducted them for so many years in their pilgrimage, and at length settled them where they afterwards founded the great city of Mexico. There they raised to him that superb temple so much celebrated even by the Spaniards, in which were annually holden three solemn festivals in the fifth, ninth, and fifteenth months; besides those kept every four years, every thirteen years, and at the beginning of every century. His statue was of gigantic size, in the posture of a man seated on a blue-coloured bench, from the four corners of which issued four huge snakes. His forehead was blue, but his face was covered with a golden mask, while another of the same kind covered the back of his head. Upon his head he carried a beautiful crest, shaped like the beak of a bird; upon his neck a collar consisting of ten figures of the human heart; in his right hand, a large, blue, twisted club; in his left, a shield, on which  
appeared



appeared five balls of feathers disposed in the form of a cross, and from the upper part of the shield rose a golden flag with four arrows, which the Mexicans pretended to have been sent to them from heaven to perform those glorious actions which we have seen in their history. His body was girt with a large golden snake, and adorned with various lesser figures of animals made of gold and precious stones, which ornaments and insignia had each their peculiar meaning. They never deliberated upon making war without imploring the protection of this god, with prayers and sacrifices ; and offered up a greater number of human victims to him than to any other of the gods.

Tlacahuepancuexcotzin, likewise a god of war, the younger brother and companion of Huitzilopochtli. His image was worshipped along with his brother's, in the chief sanctuary of Mexico ; but no where with greater devotion than at the court of Tēzcuco.

Painalton (swift or hurried), a god of war, and lieutenant of Huitzilopochtli. As they invoked the latter in those wars which were undertaken after serious deliberation, so they called upon Painalton upon sudden occasions, such as an unexpected attack of the enemy. Then the priests ran about the city with the image of the god, which was worshipped together with those of the other gods of war, calling upon him with loud cries, and making sacrifices to him of quails, and other animals. All the men of war were then obliged to run to arms.

Jacateuētlī (the lord who guides), the god of commerce (*r*), for whom the merchants celebrated two great annual festivals in his temple at Mexico ; one in the ninth,

(*r*) Jacateuētlī was also called *Xiacateuētlī* and *Jacacolinbqui*.

ninth, and another in the seventeenth month, with many sacrifices of human victims, and superb repasts.

Mixcoatl, the goddess of hunting, and the principal deity of the Otomies, who, living among the mountains, were for the most part hunters. The Matlatzincas likewise worshipped her with peculiar reverence. She had two temples in Mexico, and in one of them called *Teotlalpan*, was held a great festival with numerous sacrifices of the wild animals, in the fourteenth month.

Opochtli, the god of fishing. He was believed to be the inventor of nets and other instruments of fishing, whence he was particularly revered by fishermen, as their protector. In Cuitlahuac, a city upon a little island in the lake of Chalco, there was a god of fishing highly honoured, named *Amimitl*, who probably differed from Opochtli no otherwise than in name.

Huixtocihuatl, the goddess of salt, was worshipped by the Mexicans upon account of the salt works which they had at a little distance from the capital. A feast was celebrated to her in the seventh month.

Tzapotlatenan, the goddess of physic. She was supposed to have been the inventress of the oil called *Oxiti*, and other most useful drugs. She was yearly honoured with the sacrifice of human victims, and with particular hymns composed in her praise.

Texcatzoncatl, the god of wine; known likewise by other names (*s*), from the effects produced by wine. He had a temple in Mexico, in which four hundred priests were consecrated to his worship, and where for him, and the other gods his companions, a yearly feast was held in the thirteenth month.

Ixtlilton

(s) Such as *Tequecbmecaniani* the strangler, and *Teatlauiani* the drowner.

Ixtlilton (the black-faced) seems to have been a god of physic; for they used to bring sick children to his temple, to be cured. Their fathers brought them, and dictating to them the prayers with which they were to ask for health, made them dance before the image; and then gave them a water to drink which had been blessed by the priests consecrated to the god.

Coatlícue, or *Coatlantona*, was the goddess of flowers. She had a temple in Mexico called *Jopico*, where a festival was celebrated to her by the *Xochimanqui*, or composers of nosegays of flowers, in the third month which falls in spring. They presented her among other things with beautiful braids of flowers. We do not know whether this goddess was the same with the mother of Huitzilopochtli.

Tlazolteotl was the god whom the Mexicans invoked to obtain pardon of their sins, and to be freed from the disgrace to which the guilty are exposed. The principal devotees of this false deity were lustful men, who courted his protection with sacrifices and with offerings (*t*).

Xipe is the name given by historians to the god of the goldsmiths, (*u*) who was greatly revered among the Mexicans. They were persuaded that all those who neglected his worship, would be punished with diseases, particularly with the itch, boils, and severe pains in the eyes and the head. They took care, therefore, to distinguish themselves by the cruelty of their sacrifices, which  
were

(*t*) Boturini asserts, that Tlazolteotl was the immodest and Hebeian goddess; and *Macuilxochibiquetzalli*, the Venus *Pronuba*. But the Mexicans never attributed to their gods those shameful irregularities, which the Greeks and Romans imputed to theirs.

(*u*) *Xipe* has no meaning; so that I imagine the Spanish writers not knowing the Mexican name of this god, applied to him the two first syllables of the name of his feast *Xipehualtlatli*.



were made at a festival usually celebrated in the second month.

Nappateuctli (four times lord) was the god of the mat-weavers. He was said to be a benign god, easy to pardon injuries, and generous towards all. He had two temples in Mexico, where a festival was held in the thirteenth month.

Omacatl was the god of mirth. Upon occasion of any public rejoicing, or any great feast of the Mexican lords, they imagined they would certainly meet with some disaster if they neglected to bring the image of this god from the temple and set it up at the feast.

Tonantzin (our mother) I take to be the same with the goddess Centeotl, whom we have mentioned before. She had a temple upon a mountain, about three miles from Mexico towards the north, whither the nations came in crowds to worship her, with a wonderful number of sacrifices. At the foot of that hill is now the most famous sanctuary in the new world, dedicated to the true God; where people from the most remote countries assemble to worship the celebrated and truly miraculous image of the most Holy Lady of *Guadaloupe*; thus converting a place of abomination into a mercy-seat, where religion has distributed its favours, for the benefit of those nations, in the place that has been stained with the blood of so many of their ancestors.

Teteoinan was the mother of the gods, which the word itself signifies. As the Mexicans called themselves the children of the gods, they gave to this goddess the name likewise of *Tocitzin*, that is, our grand-mother. I have already spoken of the origin and deification of this pretended mother of the gods in the second book, where I gave an account of the tragical death of the princess of Colhuacan.

Colhuacan. This goddess had a temple in Mexico, where a most solemn feast was held in the eleventh month. She was particularly adored by the Tlascalans; and midwives worshipped her as their protectress. Almost all the Spanish writers confound her with Tonantzin, but they are certainly different.

Ilamateuctli, for whom the Mexicans had a feast upon the third day of the seventeenth month, seems to have been the goddess of age. Her name means nothing more than Old Lady.

Tepitoton (little ones), was the name given by the Mexicans to their penates, or household gods, and the images that represented them. Of these little images, the kings and great lords had always six in their houses, the nobles four, and the lower people two. They were to be seen every where in the public streets.

Besides these gods which were the most considerable, and some others which we omit, that we may not tire the reader, there were two hundred and sixty, to which as many days were consecrated. Those days take their names from them, and are those we find in the first thirteen months of their calendar.

The Mexican gods were generally the same with those of the other nations of Anahuac; differing only in their greater or less celebrity, in some of their rites, and sometimes in their names. The god the most celebrated in Mexico was *Huitzilopochtli*; in Cholula and Huexotzinco, *Quetzalcoatl*; among the Totonacas, *Centeotl*; and among the Otomies, *Mixcoatl*. The Tlascalans, although the constant enemies of the Mexicans, adored the same gods; and even their most favoured deity was the very *Huitzilopochtli* of the Mexicans, but under the name of *Camaxtle*. The people of Tezcucó,

as allies, friends, and neighbours, conformed almost entirely with the Mexicans.

The number of the images by which those false gods were represented, and worshipped in the temples, the houses, the streets, and the woods, were infinite. Zumarraga, first bishop of Mexico, affirms, that the Franciscans had, in the course of eight years, broken more than twenty thousand idols ; but that number is trifling compared to those of the capital only. They were generally made of clay, and certain kinds of stone and wood ; but sometimes too of gold and other metals : and there were some of gems. In a high mountain of *Achiauhtla*, in *Mizteca*, *Benedict Fernandez*, a celebrated Dominican missionary, found a little idol called by the *Miztecas* the *heart of the people*. It was a very precious emerald, four inches long and two inches broad, upon which was engraved the figure of a bird, and round it that of a little snake. The Spaniards offered fifteen hundred sequins for it ; but the zealous missionary before all the people, and with great solemnity reduced it to powder. The most extraordinary idol of the Mexicans was that of *Huitzilopochtli*, which was made of certain seeds pasted together with human blood. Almost all their idols were coarse and hideous from the fantastical parts of which they were composed in order to represent their attributes and employments.

The divinity of those false gods was acknowledged by prayers, kneeling and prostrations, with vows, fasts, and other austerities, with sacrifices and offerings, and various rites, some common to other nations, and others peculiar to the Mexican religion alone. They prayed generally upon their knees, with their faces turned towards the east, and therefore made their sanctuaries with  
the



the door to the west. They made vows for their children as well as for themselves, and frequently dedicated them to the service of their gods in some temple or monastery. Those who happened to be in danger from stumbling or slipping, upon a journey, made vows to visit the temple of the god Omacatl, and to offer up incense and paper. They made frequent use of the name of God to confirm the truth; and their oaths were in this form; *Cuix à mo nechitta in Toteotzin?* Does not our god see me now? Then naming the principal god, or any other they particularly revered, they kissed their hand, after having touched the earth with it. Great faith was put in oaths of this kind by way of purgation when any one was accused of a crime; for they thought no man could be so rash as to venture to abuse the name of God, at the evident risk of being most severely punished by heaven.

Metamorphoses, or transformations, were not wanting to the mythology of the Mexicans. Among others they related one of a man named *Jappan*, who having undertaken to do penance upon a mountain, yielded to the temptations of a woman, and fell into the sin of adultery. He was immediately beheaded by *Jaotl*, to whom the gods had given the charge of watching over his conduct, and by the gods themselves was transformed into a black scorpion. *Jaotl*, not satisfied with that punishment, executed it likewise upon *Tlahuitzin*, the wife of *Jappan*, who was transformed into a white scorpion, while *Jaotl* himself, for having exceeded the bounds of his commission, was turned into a locust. They said it was from the shame of that crime that scorpions shun the light, and hide themselves under stones.

The Mexicans, and other nations of Anahuac, like all civilized nations, had temples or places allotted for the purposes

purposes of religion, where the people assembled to worship their gods, and implore their protection. They called the temple *Teocalli*, that is, the house of god, and *Teopan*, the place of God; which names they applied with greater propriety to the temples erected in honour of the true God, after they embraced Christianity.

The city and kingdom of Mexico began with the building of the sanctuary of Huitzilopochtli or *Mexitli*, whence it has derived its name. That edifice was then a miserable hut. Itzcoatl, the first king and conqueror of that nation, after the taking of Azcapozalco, enlarged it. Montezuma I. his successor, built a new temple, which had some shew of magnificence; and, at length Ahuitzotl raised and dedicated that immense temple which his predecessor Tizoc had planned. This was the temple which the Spaniards celebrated so highly after they had destroyed it. It were to be wished that their accuracy in describing its dimensions had been but equal to their zeal in destroying that superb monument of superstition: but such is the variety of their accounts, that, after having laboured to reconcile them, I have found it impossible to ascertain its proportions; nor should I ever have been able to form an idea of the architecture of that temple without the figure presented to us by the Anonymous Conqueror; a copy of which I have here subjoined, although I have paid less regard in it to his delineation than his description. I shall mention therefore all that I think may be depended upon, after a very tedious comparison of the descriptions given by four eye-witnesses, and neglect what I have been unable to extricate from the confusion of different authors (x).

This

(x) The four eye-witnesses whose descriptions we have connected together are the conqueror Cortes, Bernal Diaz, the Anonymous Conqueror, and Sahagun.

This great temple occupied the centre of the city, and, together with the other temples and buildings annexed to it, comprehended all that space upon which the great cathedral church now stands, part of the greater market-place, and part likewise of the streets and buildings around. Within the inclosure of the wall which encompassed it in a square form, the conqueror Cortes affirms that a town of five hundred houses might have stood (y). The wall, built of stone and lime, was very thick, eight feet

gun. The three first lived for several months in the palace of king Axajacatl, near the temple, and therefore saw it every day. Sahagun, although he never saw it entire, yet saw some part of it, and could discover what ground it had occupied. Gomara, who did not himself see the temple, nor ever was in Mexico, received the different accounts of it from the conquerors themselves who saw it. Acosta, whose description has been copied by Herrera and Solis, instead of the great temple describes one perfectly different. This author, although in other respects deserving of credit, was not in Mexico till sixty years after the conquest, when there were no remains of the temple.

In a Dutch edition of Solis, was given an incorrect print of the great temple, which was afterwards given by the authors of the *General History of Voyages*, and is still to be met with in an edition of the conqueror Cortes's Letters, published at Mexico in 1770: but the carelessness of the editors of that edition will appear from comparing the print in it with Cortes's own description. He says, in his first letter, though somewhat hyperbolically, that the great temple of Mexico was higher than the tower of the cathedral church of Seville, while in the print mentioned it scarcely appears to be seven or eight perches or toises. Cortes declares that five hundred Mexican nobles fortified themselves in the upper area, whereas that space as represented in the print could not contain more than seventy or eighty men. Lastly, omitting many other contradictions, Cortes says, that the temple consisted of three or four bodies, and that each body had, as he describes it, its corridors or balconies; yet in the print it is represented as consisting of one body only, without any of those corridors at all.

(y) The Anonymous Conqueror says, that what was within the wall was like a city. Gomara affirms, that the wall was a very long bowshot in length upon every side. Torquemada, although agreeing with Gomara in book viii. chap. 2. says afterwards in ch. xix. that the circumference of the wall was above three thousand paces, which is plainly a mistake. Dr. Hernandez, in his prolix description of the temple, preserved in manuscript in the library of the Escorial, and which Father Nieremberg has made use of in his *Natural History*, allows to the wall, of every side, two hundred Toledan cubits, which is about eighty-six perches.



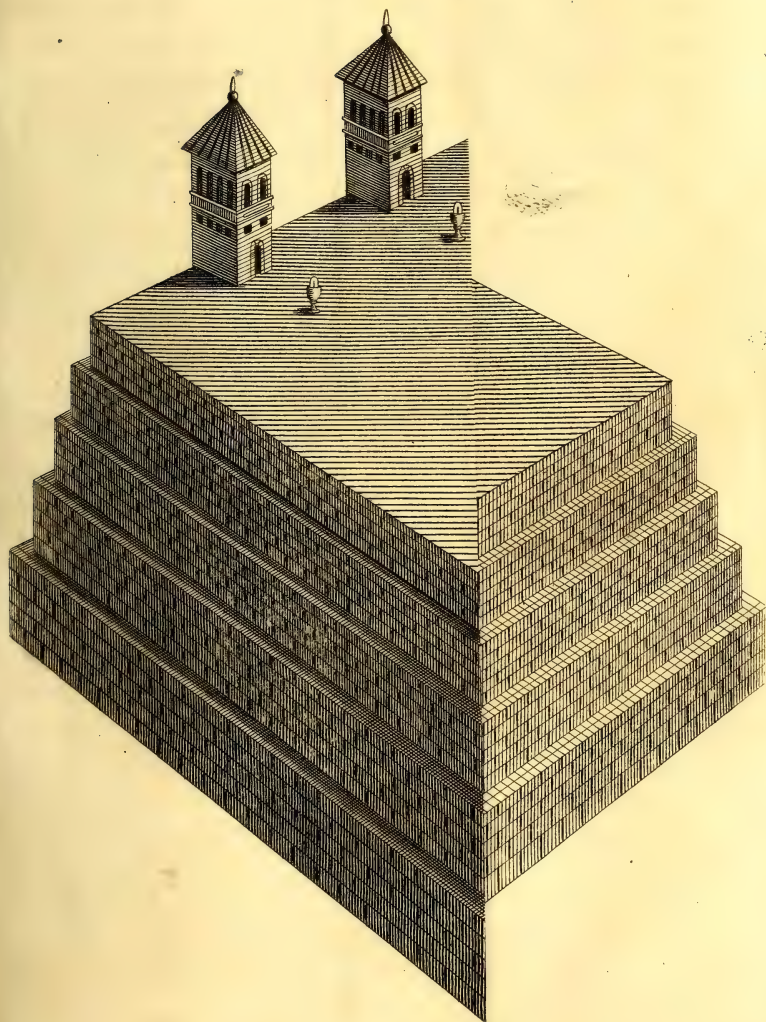
feet high, crowned with battlements, in the form of nichés, and ornamented with many stone figures in the shape of serpents, whence it obtained the name of *Coatepantli*, or the wall of serpents. It had four gates to the four cardinal points: the eastern gate looked to a broad street which led to the lake of Tezcucó: the rest corresponded to the three principal streets of the city, the broadest and the straightest, which formed a continuation with those built upon the lake that led to Iztapalapan, to Tacuba, and to Tepejacac. Over each of the four gates was an arsenal filled with a vast quantity of offensive and defensive weapons, where the troops went when it was necessary, to be supplied with arms. The space within the walls was curiously paved with such smooth and polished stones that the horses of the Spaniards could not move upon them without slipping and tumbling down. In the middle was raised an immense solid building of greater length than breadth (z), covered with square equal pieces of pavement. The building consisted of five bodies nearly equal in height, but differing in length and breadth; the highest being narrowest. The first body, or basis of the building, was more than fifty perches long from east to west, and about forty-three in breadth, from north to south (a). The second body was about a perch less in length and breadth than the first; the third as much

(z) Sahagun makes the temple perfectly square, but the Anonymous Conqueror, both in the description and in the figure which he has left us, represents it to have been of greater length than breadth, like those of Teotihuacan which served as models for all the rest.

(a) Sahagun gives to the first body upon every side three hundred and sixty Toledan feet, and that is the measure of its length. Gomara gives it fifty *brazas*, which is the measure of its breadth. Three hundred and sixty Toledan feet make three hundred and eight Parisian, or a little more than fifty perches. Fifty *brazas*, or *estados* make two hundred and fifty-seven Parisian feet, or about forty-two perches.

*The greater.*

*Pl. IX.*



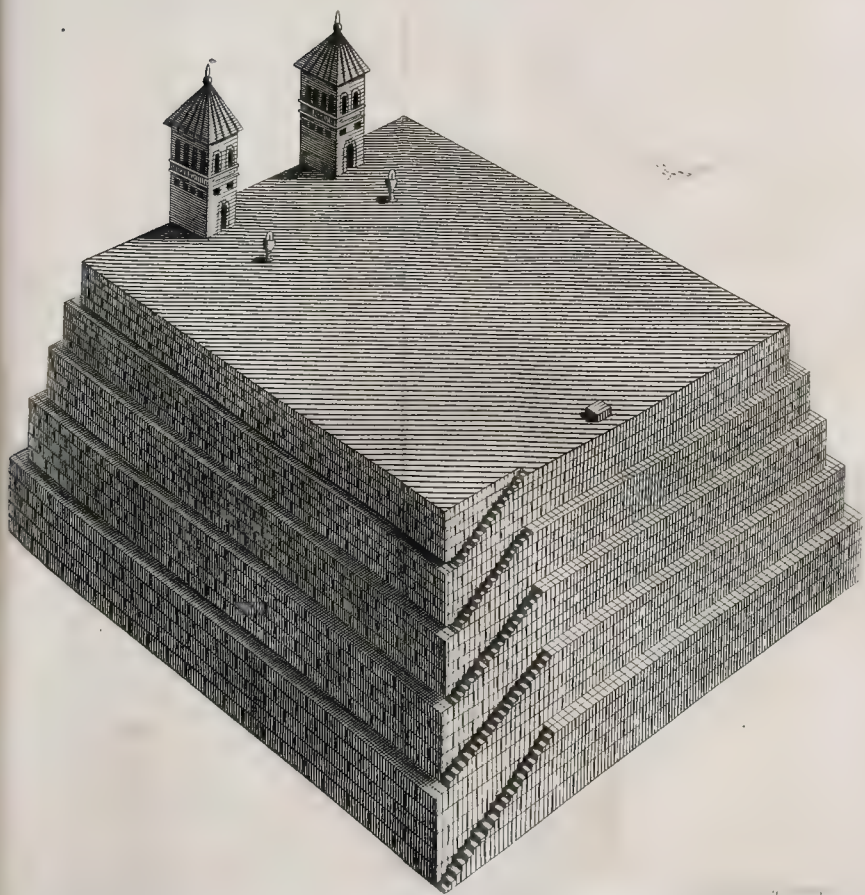
*Designed by L. W. G. G.  
Printed by E. Brown.*





*The greater Temple of Mexico.*

Pl. LX.





much less than the second; and the rest in proportion, so that upon each body there remained a free space or plain which would allow three, or even four men abreast to walk round the next body.

The stairs, which were upon the south-side, were made of large well formed stones, and consisted of a hundred and fourteen steps, each a foot high. They were not, however, one single stair-case continued all the way, as they have been represented by the authors of the General History of Travels, and the Publishers of Cortes's Letters, in Mexico; but were divided into as many separate stair-cases as there were bodies of the building in the manner shewn in our plate; so that after getting to the top of the first stair-case, one could not mount the second, without going along the first plain round the second; nor the third, without going along the second plain, and so of the rest. This will be better understood by consulting the plate, which is copied from that of the Anonymous Conqueror (*b*), but corrected as to the dimensions, from that author's own description, and other historians.

Upon the fifth body was a plain, which we shall call the upper area, which was about forty-three perches long (*c*), and thirty-four broad, and was as well paved as the great area below. At the eastern extremity of this

(*b*) A copy of the drawing of the temple made by the Anonymous Conqueror, is to be found in the collection of Jo. Ramusio; and another in Father Kircher's work, entitled, *Oedipus Ægyptiacus*.

(*c*) Sahagun, whose measures have been adopted by Torquemada, allows no more than seventy Toledan feet square, which is about ten perches, to the upper area; but it is impossible that five hundred Mexican nobles, as Cortes asserts, could have stood to fight against the Spaniards, in such a narrow space; especially if we believe Bernard Diaz, who says, that four thousand Mexicans fortified themselves in that temple, and that numbers had got up before the nobles ascended.



this plain were raised two towers to the height of fifty-six feet, or nearly nine perches. Each was divided into three bodies, of which the lower was of stone and lime, and the other two of wood very well wrought and painted. The inferior body or basis of each were properly the sanctuaries, where, upon an altar of stone, five feet high, were placed their tutelary idols. One of these two sanctuaries was consecrated to Huitzilopochtli, and the gods of war; and the other to Tezcatlipoca. The other bodies were destined to the keeping of some things belonging to the worship, and the ashes of some kings and lords who, through particular devotion, desired that to be done. The doors of both sanctuaries were towards the west, and both the towers terminated in a very beautiful wooden cupola. There is no author who has described the internal disposition and ornaments of the sanctuaries; nor indeed the size of the towers; so that what is represented in our plate is only delineated from conjecture. I believe, however, we may venture to say without danger of mistake, that the height of the building without the towers, was not less than nineteen perches, and with the towers exceeded twenty-eight. From that height one might see the lake, the cities around, and a great part of the valley; and it has been affirmed by eye-witnesses to be the finest prospect in the world.

In the upper area was the altar for the common sacrifices, and in the lower that for the gladiatorial. Before the two sanctuaries were two stone stoves of the height of a man, and of the shape of our holy pyx, in which they preserved a constant fire, night and day, with the utmost care; fearing that if ever it went out, they should suffer the most dreadful punishment from heaven.

heaven. In the other temples and religious buildings comprised within the inclosure of the great wall, there were six hundred stoves, of the same size and figure, which in the night time, when they used all to be burning, presented a very pleasing sight.

In the space betwixt the wall and the great temple, there were, besides a place for their religious dances, upwards of forty lesser temples, consecrated to the other gods, several colleges of priests, some seminaries for youth and children of both sexes, and many other buildings scattered about, of which, for their singularity, it will be necessary to give some account.

The most remarkable were the temples of Tezcatlipoca, Tlaloc, and Quetzalcoatl. They all resembled one another in form, but were of different sizes, and all fronted the great temple; while the other temples without this area were built with the front towards the west. The temple of Quetzalcoatl alone differed from the rest in form; it being round, the others all quadrangular. The door of this sanctuary was the mouth of an enormous serpent of stone, armed with fangs. Some Spaniards tempted by curiosity to go into that diabolical temple, afterwards confessed the horror which they felt upon entering it. Among other temples there was one called *Ilhuicatitlan*, dedicated to the planet Venus, in which was a great pillar with the figure of that star painted or engraved upon it; near which, at the time of her appearance, they sacrificed prisoners.

The colleges of priests, and the seminaries were various; but we particularly know only of five colleges or monasteries of priests, and three seminaries of youth, although there must certainly have been more, from

the prodigious number of persons that were found there consecrated to the worship of the gods.

Among the remarkable buildings within this area, besides the four arsenals over the four gates, there was another near the temple *Tezcacalli* (house of mirrors), so called from its walls being covered with mirrors on the inside. There was another small temple called *Tecizcalli*, all adorned with shells which had a house annexed to it, into which, at certain times, the king of Mexico retired for the purposes of fasting and prayer. The high-priest had likewise a house of retirement called *Pojaubtlan*, and there were several others for other persons. There was also a great house of entertainment to accommodate strangers of distinction who came upon a devout visit to the temple, or from curiosity to see the grandeurs of the court. There were ponds in which the priests bathed; and fountains, the water of which they drank. In the pond called *Tezcapan*, many bathed in obedience to a particular vow made to the gods. The water of one of the fountains called *Toxpalatl* was esteemed holy: it was drank only at the most solemn feasts, and no person was allowed to taste it at any other time (*d*). There were places allotted to the bringing up of birds for the sacrifices, gardens in which flowers and odoriferous herbs were raised for the decoration of the altars; and even a little wood in which were artificially represented hills, rocks, and precipices, and from which they issued to that general chace which we shall describe in another part of this work.

#### Particular

(*d*) The fountain *Toxpalatl*, the water of which was excellent, was stopped up, at the time when the Spaniards destroyed the temple; it was opened again in 1582, in the little square of the Marquis (which at present is called *el Empe-  
dradillo*), near to the cathedral; but for some reason or other, of which we are ignorant, it was a second time stopped up.



Particular apartments were destined for the keeping of the idols, the ornaments, and all the furniture of their temples; and among them were three halls so large, that the Spaniards were astonished upon seeing them. Among the buildings most striking from their singularity, was a great prison like a cage, in which they kept the idols of the conquered nations as if imprisoned. In some other buildings of this kind they preserved the heads of those who had been sacrificed, some of which were nothing but heaps of bones piled upon one another. In others the heads were arranged in regular order upon poles, or fixed against the walls, forming, by the variety of their disposition, a spectacle not less curious than horrid. The greatest of these buildings called *Huitzompan*, although not within the great wall, was but a little way from it, over against the principal gate. This was a prodigious rampart of earth, longer than it was broad, in the form of a half pyramid. In the lowest part it was one hundred and fifty-four feet long. The ascent to the plain upon the top of it was by a staircase of thirty steps. Upon that plain were erected about four feet asunder, more than seventy very long beams, bored from top to bottom. By these holes, sticks were passed across from one beam to another, and upon each of them a certain number of heads were strung by the temples. Upon the steps also of the stair-case there was a head betwixt every stone; and at each end of the same edifice was a tower which appeared to have been made only of skulls and lime. As soon as a head began to crumble with age, the priests supplied its place with a fresh one from the bone-heaps in order to preserve the due number and arrangement. The skulls of ordinary victims were stripped of the scalp; but those of men  
of

of rank, and great warriors, they endeavoured to preserve with the skin and beard and hair entire, which served only to render more frightful those trophies of their barbarous superstition. The number of heads preserved in this and such other buildings is so great, that some of the Spanish conquerors took the trouble of reckoning up those upon the steps of this building, and upon the files betwixt the beams, and found them amount to one hundred and thirty-six thousand (*e*). They who wish for a more minute detail of the buildings within the wall of the great temple, may read the relation of Sahagun in Torquemada, and the description of the seventy-eight edifices there by Dr. Hernandez, in the Natural History of Nieremberg.

Besides these temples there were others scattered in different quarters of the city. Some authors make the number of temples in that capital (comprehending, as may be imagined, even the smallest) amount to two thousand; and that of the towers to three hundred and sixty, but we do not know that any one ever actually counted them. There can be no doubt, however, that they were very numerous, and among them seven or eight distinguishable for their size; but that of Tlatelolco, consecrated likewise to Huitzilopochtli, rose above them all.

Out of the capital, the most celebrated were those of Tezcucó, Cholula, and Teotihuacan. Bernal Diaz, who had the curiosity to number the steps of their stairs, says, that the temple of Tezcucó had one hundred and seventeen, and that of Cholula one hundred and twenty. We do not know whether that famous temple of Tezcucó

was

(*e*) Andrea de Tapia, an officer belonging to Cortes, and one of them who counted the skulls, gave this information to Gomara the historian, according to his own testimony in cap. lxxxii. of his History of Mexico.

was the same with Tezcutzinco, so celebrated by Valadès, in his *Christian Rhetoric*, or the same with that renowned tower of nine bodies, erected by the king Nezahualcojotl, to the Creator of heaven. The great temple of Cholula, like many others of that city, was dedicated to their protector Quetzalcoatl. All the old historians speak with wonder of the number of the temples in Cholula. Cortes wrote to the emperor Charles V. that from the top of one temple he had counted more than four hundred towers of others (*f*). The lofty pyramid raised by the Toltecas remains to this day, in that place where there was formerly a temple consecrated to that false deity, and now a holy sanctuary of the mother of the true God; but the pyramid from its great antiquity is so covered with earth and bushes, that it seems more like a natural eminence than an edifice. We are ignorant, indeed, of its dimensions, but its circumference in the lower part is not less than half a mile (*g*). One may ascend to the top by a path made in a spiral direction round the pyramid, and I went up on horseback in 1744. This is that famous hill about which so many fables have been feigned, and which Boturini believed to have been raised by the Toltecas as a place of refuge in the event of another deluge like Noah's.

### The

(*f*) "Certifico a vuestra Alteza que yo contè desder una mezquita quatrocientas y tantas "torres en la dicha ciudad (de Cholula) y todàs son de mezquitas." Letter to Charles V. Oct. 30, 1520. The anonymous conqueror affirms, that he counted one hundred and ninety towers of the temples and palaces. Bernal Diaz says, that they exceeded a hundred; but it is probable, that the two authors counted those only which were remarkable for their height. Some later authors have said that these towers were as many in number as the days of the year.

(*g*) Betancourt says, that the height of the pyramid of Cholula was upwards of forty *estados*, that is, more than two hundred and five Parisian feet; but this author has been too sparing in his measure, as that height unquestionably exceeds five hundred feet.



The famous edifices of Teotihuacan, about three miles south from that place, and more than twenty from Mexico, towards Greco, still subsist: those immense buildings which served as a model for the temples of that country, were two temples consecrated the one to the sun and the other to the moon, represented by two idols of monstrous bulk, made of stone and covered with gold. That of the sun had a great concavity in the breast, and an image of that planet of the purest gold fixed in it. The conquerors possessed themselves of the gold, the idols were broken by order of the first bishop of Mexico, and the fragments remained in that place till the end of the last century, and may, perhaps, be there still. The base, or inferior body of the temple of the sun, is eighty-eight perches long, and eighty-six broad, and the height of the whole building is in proportion (*b*). That of the moon is eighty-six perches long in the base, and sixty-three broad. Each of these temples is divided into four bodies, and as many stair-cases, which are arranged in the same manner with those of the great temple of Mexico; but cannot now be traced, partly from their ruinous condition, and partly from the great quantity of earth with which they are every where covered. Round these edifices are scattered several little hills, which are supposed to have been as many lesser temples, dedicated to the other planets and stars; and from this place being so full of religious buildings, antiquity gave it the name of *Teotihuacan*.

The

(*b*) Gemelli measured the length and breadth of those temples, but had no instrument to measure their height. Cav. Boturini measured their height, but when he wrote his work he had not the measure by him, yet he thinks he found the temple of the sun to have been two hundred Castilian cubits high, that is, eighty-six perches.

The number of temples throughout the whole Mexican empire was very great. Torquemada thought there might be above forty thousand; but I am persuaded they would far exceed that number, if we should take the lesser ones into the account; for there is not an inhabited place without one temple, nor any place of any extent without a considerable number.

The architecture of the great temples was for the most part the same with that of the great temple of Mexico; but there were many likewise of a different structure. Many consisted of a single body in the form of a pyramid, with a stair-case; others of ordinary bodies, with similar stair-cases, as appears in the subjoined plate, which is copied from one published by Didaco Valadès in his *Christian Rhetoric* (i).

The superstition of those people not contented with such a great number of temples in their cities, villages, and hamlets, erected many altars upon the tops of the hills, in the woods, and in the streets, not only for the purpose of encouraging the idolatrous worship of travellers, but for the celebration of certain sacrifices to the gods of mountains and other rustic deities.

The revenues of the great temple of Mexico, like those of the other temples of the court and the empire, were very large. Each temple had its own lands and possessions, and even its own peasants to cultivate them. Thence was drawn all that was necessary for the maintenance of the priests, together with the wood which was consumed in great quantities in the temples.

The

(i) Didaco Valadès Franciscano, after having been employed many years in the conversion of the Mexicans, came to Rome, where he was made procurator-general of his order. A little time after he published his learned and valuable work in Latin, intitled, *Rhetorica Christiana*, dedicated to pope Gregory the XIIIth, adorned with many representations of Mexican antiquities.

The priests that were the stewards of the temples frequently visited their possessions, and those who cultivated them, thought themselves happy in contributing by their labour to the worship of the gods and the support of their ministers. In the kingdom of Acolhuacan, those nine and twenty cities which provided necessaries for the royal palace, were likewise obliged to provide for the temples. There is reason to believe that that tract of country, which went under the name of *Teotlalpan* (land of the gods), was so named from being among the possessions of the temples. There were besides great numbers daily of free-offerings, from the devout of every kind, of provisions and first fruits, which were presented in returning thanks for seasonable rains and other blessings of heaven. Near the temples were the granaries where all the grain and other provisions, necessary for the maintenance of the priests, were kept; and the overplus was annually distributed to the poor, for whom also there were hospitals in the larger towns.

The number of the priests among the Mexicans corresponded with the multitude of gods and temples; nor was the homage which they paid to the deities themselves much greater than the veneration in which they held their ministers. We may form some conjecture of the immense number of priests in the Mexican empire, from the number within the area of the great temple, which some ancient historians tell us, amounted to five thousand. Nor will that calculation appear surprising, when we consider that in that place there were four hundred priests consecrated to the service of the god Tezcatzoncatl alone. Every temple, indeed, had a considerable number, so that I should not think it rash to affirm, that there could not be less than a million of priests throughout



throughout the empire. Their number could not fail to be increased from the great respect paid to the priesthood, and the high opinion they conceived of the office of serving in the worship of the gods. The great men even vied with one another in consecrating their children for some time to the service of the temples; while the inferior nobility employed theirs in works without, such as carrying wood, feeding and keeping up the fire of the stoves, and other things of that kind; all considering the honour of serving in the worship of the gods as the greatest to which they could aspire.

There were several different orders and degrees among the priests. The chief of all were the two high priests, to whom they gave the names of *Teoteuelli* (divine lord), and *Hueitopixqui* (great priest). That eminent dignity was never conferred but upon such as were distinguished for their birth, their probity, and their great knowledge of every thing connected with the ceremonies of their religion. The high-priests were the oracles whom the kings consulted in all the most important affairs of the state, and no war was ever undertaken without their approbation. It belonged to them to anoint the king after his election, and to open the breast, and tear out the hearts of the human victims, at the most solemn sacrifices. The high-priest in the kingdom of Acolhuacan was, according to some historians, always the second son of the king. Among the Totonacas he was anointed with the elastic gum mixed with children's blood, and this they called the *divine unction* (*i*). Some authors say the same of the high-priest of Mexico.

VOL. II.

F

From

(*i*) Acosta confounds the divine unction of the high-priest with that of the king; but it was totally different; the king did not anoint himself with elastic gum, but with a particular sort of ink.

From what is said it appears, that the high-priests of Mexico were the heads of their religion only among the Mexicans, and not with respect to the other conquered nations ; these, even after being subjected to the crown of Mexico, still maintaining their priesthood independent.

The high-priesthood was conferred by election ; but we are ignorant whether the electors were of the priestly order, or the same with those who chose the political head of the empire. The high-priests of Mexico were distinguished by a tuft of cotton which hung from their breast ; and at the principal feasts they were dressed in splendid habits, upon which were represented the insignia of the god whose feast they celebrated. On solemn festivals, the high-priest of the Mixtecas was clothed in a short coat, on which the principal events of their mythology was represented ; above that he had a surplice, and over all a large capuchin ; on his head he wore plumes of green feathers, curiously interwoven with small figures of their gods ; at his shoulder hung one tassel of cotton, and another hung at his arm.

Next to this supreme dignity of the priesthood, the most respectable charge was that of the *Mexicoteohuatzin*, which was conferred by the high-priests. The employment of this officer was to attend to the due observance of the rites and ceremonies, and to watch over the conduct of those priests who had the charge of seminaries, and to punish them when guilty of a misdemeanor. In order to enable him to discharge all the duties of so extensive an appointment, he was allowed two curates or deputies, the one named the *Huitznabuateohuatzin*, the other the *Tepaneohuatzin*. The *Mexicoteohuatzin* was the superior-general of all the seminaries ; his chief badge of distinction was a little bag of copal, which he always carried along with him.

The

The *Tlatquimilolteuctli* managed the œconomy of the sanctuaries, the *Ometochtli* was the chief composer of the hymns which were sung at festivals; the *Epcocuiltzin* (1), the master of the ceremonies; the *Tlapixcatzin* the master of the chapel, who not only appointed the music, but superintended the singing and corrected the singers. Others, whose names we omit, to avoid growing tedious to our readers, were the immediate superiors of the colleges of the priests which were consecrated to different gods (m). The name *Teopixqui* was also given to the priests, which means the guard or minister of God.

To every division of the capital, and probably, of every other great city, belonged a priest of superior rank, who acted in the quality of rector to that district, and appointed every act of religion which was to be performed within the bounds of his jurisdiction. All these rectors were subject to the authority of the *Mexicoteohuatzin*.

All the offices of religion were divided among the priests. Some were the sacrificers, others the diviners; some were the composers of hymns, others those who sung. Amongst the singers some sung at certain hours of the day, others sung at certain hours of the night. Some priests had the charge of keeping the temple clean, some took care of the ornaments of the altars; to others belonged the instructing of youth, the correcting of the calendar, the ordering of festivals, and the care of the mythological paintings.

Four times a day they offered incense to the idols, namely, at day-break, at mid-day, at sun-set, and at midnight. The last offering was made by the priest whose  
turn

(1) Torquemada calls this priest *Epqualiztli*, and Hernandez *Epoaquacuiliztli*; but both of them are mistaken.

(m) Whoever is desirous of knowing the other offices and names of the priests, may consult the 8th book of Torquemada, and the account given by Hernandez, which Nieremberg inserted in his Natural History.



turn it was to do so, and the most respectable officers of the temple attended at it. To the sun they made daily new offerings, four times during the day, and five times during the night. For incense they generally made use of copal, or some other aromatic gum; but on certain festivals they employed *Chapopotli*, or bitumen of Judea. The censers were commonly made of clay; but they had also censers of gold. Every day the priests, or at least some of them, dyed their whole bodies with ink made of the foot of the *Ocotl*, which is a species of pine very aromatic, and over the ink they painted themselves with ochre or cinnabar, and every evening they bathed in ponds which were within the inclosure of the temple.

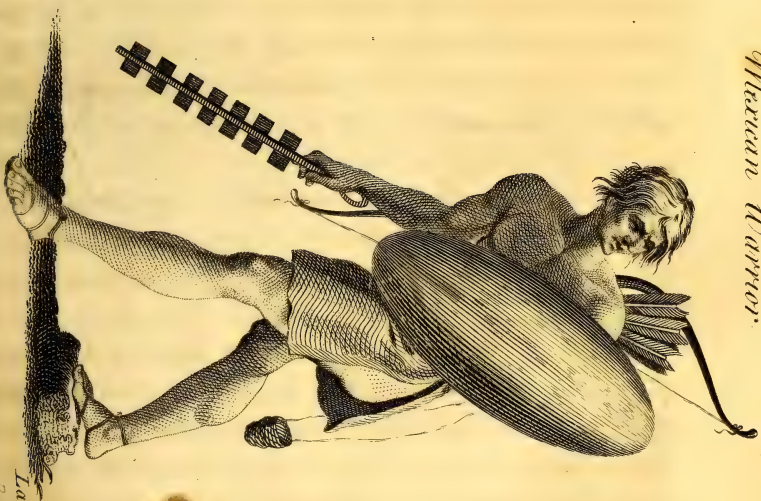
The dress of the Mexican priests was no way different from the dress of the common people, except a black cotton mantle, which they wore in the manner of a veil upon their heads; but those who in their monasteries professed a greater austerity of life, went always clothed in black, like the common priests of other nations of the empire. They never shaved, by which means the hair of many of them grew so long as to reach to their legs. It was twisted with thick cotton cords, and bedaubed with ink, forming a weighty mass not less inconvenient to be carried about with them than disgusting and even horrid to view.

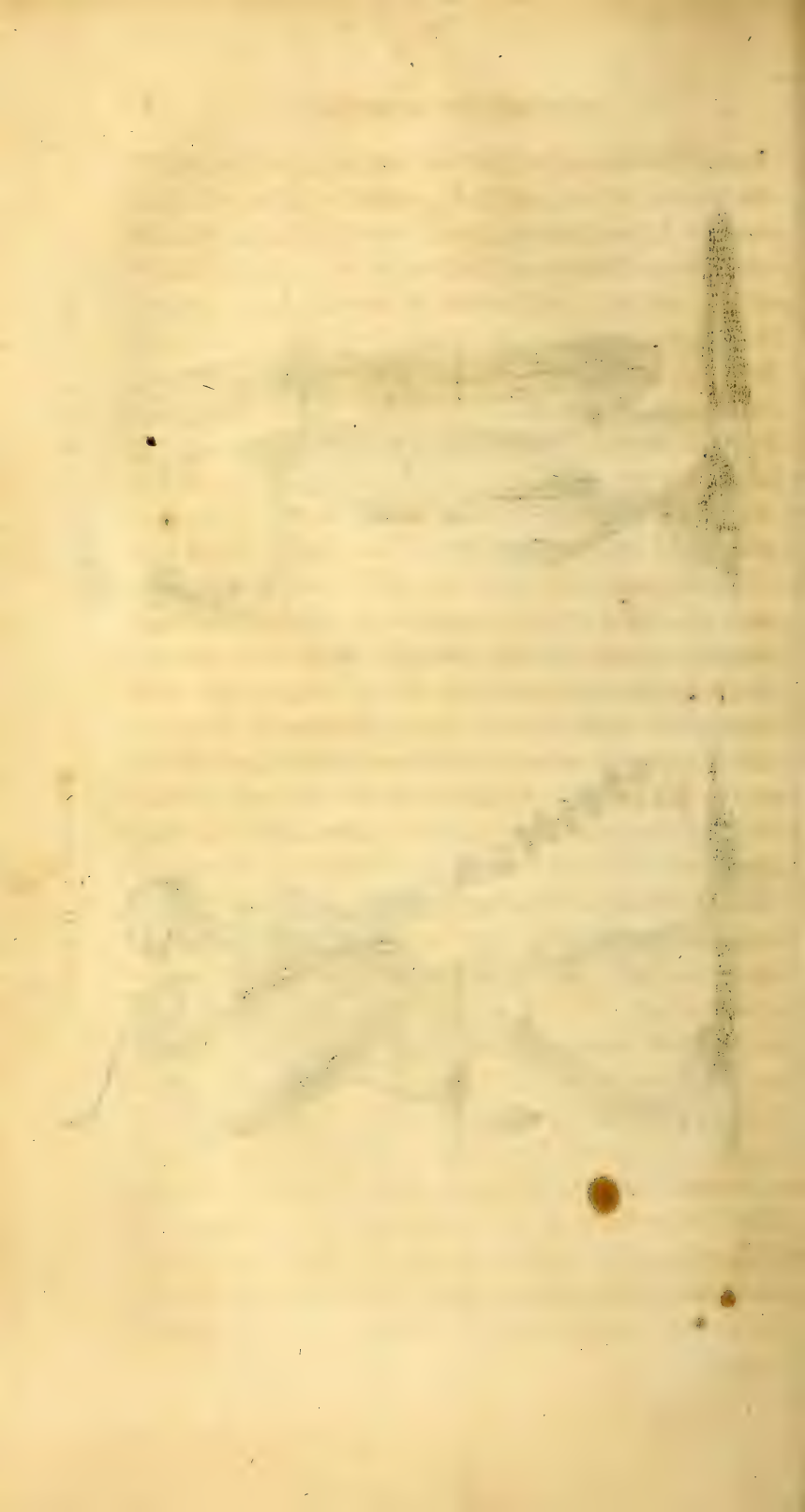
Besides the usual unction with ink, another extraordinary and more abominable one was practised every time they went to make sacrifices on the tops of the mountains, or in the dark caverns of the earth. They took a large quantity of poisonous insects, such as scorpions, spiders, and worms, and sometimes even small serpents, burned them over some stove of the temple, and beat their ashes in a mortar together with the foot of the *Ocotl*, tobacco, the herb *Ololiubqui*, and some live insects.

*Mexican Priest*



*Mexican Warrior*







insects. They presented this diabolical mixture in small vessels to their gods, and afterwards rubbed their bodies with it. When thus anointed, they became fearless to every danger, being persuaded they were rendered incapable of receiving any hurt from the most noxious reptiles of the earth, or the wildest beasts of the woods. They called it *Teopatli*, or divine medicament, and imagined it to be a powerful remedy for several disorders; on which account those who were sick, and the young children, went frequently to the priests to be anointed with it. The young lads who were trained up in the seminaries were charged with the collecting of such kind of little animals; and by being accustomed at an early age to that kind of employment, they soon lost the horror which attends the first familiarity with such reptiles. The priests not only made use of this unction, but had likewise a ridiculous superstitious practice of blowing with their breath over the sick, and made them drink water which they had blessed after their manner. The priests of the god *Ixtlilton*, were remarkable for this custom.

The priests observed many fasts and great austerity of life; they never were intoxicated with drinking, and seldom ever tasted wine. The priests of Tezcatzoncatl as soon as the daily singing in praise of their god was over, laid a heap of three hundred and three canes on the ground, corresponding to the number of fingers, of which heap only one was bored; every person lifted one, and he who happened to take up the cane which was bored, was the only person who tasted the wine. All the time that they were employed in the service of the temple, they abstained from all other women but their wives; they even affected so much modesty and reserve,

serve, that when they met a woman, they fixed their eyes on the ground that they might not see her. Any incontinence amongst the priests was severely punished. The priest who, at Teohuacan, was convicted of having violated his chastity, was delivered up by the priests to the people, who at night killed him by the bastinado. In Ichcatlan, the high-priest was obliged to live constantly within the temple, and to abstain from commerce with any woman whatsoever; and if he unluckily failed in any of his duties, he was certain of being torn in pieces, and his bloody limbs were presented as an example to his successor. They poured boiling water on the head of those who, from laziness, did not rise to the nocturnal duties of the temple, or bored their lips and ears, and if they did not correct that, or any other such fault, they were ducked in the lake and banished from the temple during the festival, which was made to the god of water in the sixth month. The priests in general lived together in communities, subject to superiors who watched over their conduct.

The office and character of a priest among the Mexicans was not in its nature perpetual. There were certainly some who dedicated their whole lives to the service of the altars; but others engaged in it only for a certain time, to fulfil some vow made by their fathers, or as a particular act of devotion. Nor was the priesthood confined to the male sex, some women being employed in the immediate service of the temples. They offered incense to the idols, tended the sacred fire, swept the area, prepared the daily offering of provisions, and presented it with their hands to the idols; but they were entirely excluded from the office of sacrificing, and the higher dignities of the priesthood. Among the priestesses,

esses, some were destined by their parents from their infancy to the service of the temples; others on account of some particular vow which they had made during sickness, or that they might ensure from their gods a good marriage, or the prosperity of their families, entered upon such offices for one or two years.

The consecration of the first was made in the following manner. As soon as the girl was born, the parents offered her to some god, and informed the rector of that district of it; he gave notice to the Tepanteohuatzin, who, as we have already mentioned, was the superior general of the seminaries. Two months after they carried her to the temple, and put a small broom, and a small censer of clay in her little hands, with a little copal in it, to shew her destination. Every month they repeated the visit to the temple and the offering, together with the bark of some trees for the sacred fire. When the child attained her fifth year, the parents consigned her to the Tepanteohuatzin, who lodged her in a female seminary, where children were instructed in religion, and the proper duties and employments of their sex. The first thing done to those who entered into the service on account of some private vow, was the cutting off their hair. Both the latter and the former lived in great purity of manners, silence, and retirement, under their superiors, without having any communication with men. Some of them rose about two hours before midnight, others at midnight, and others at day-break, to stir up and keep the fire burning, and to offer incense to the idols; and although in this function they assembled with the priests, they were separated from each other, the men forming one wing and the women another, both under the view of their superiors, who prevented any disorder from happening



happening. Every morning they prepared the offering of provisions which was presented to the idols, and swept the lower area of the temple, and the time which was not occupied in these, or other religious duties, was employed in spinning and weaving beautiful cloths for the dress of the idols, and the decoration of the sanctuaries. Nothing was more zealously attended to than the chastity of these virgins. Any trespass of this nature was unpardonable; if it remained an entire secret, the female culprit endeavoured to appease the anger of the gods by fasting and austerity of life; for she dreaded that in punishment of her crime her flesh would rot. When a virgin, destined from her infancy to the worship of the gods, arrived at the age of sixteen or eighteen, at which years they were usually married, her parents sought for a husband to her, and after they found one, presented to the Tepanteohuatzin a certain number of quails in plates curiously varnished, and a certain quantity of copal, of flowers and provisions, accompanied with a studied address, in which they thanked him for the care and attention he had shewn in the education of their daughter, and demanded his permission to settle her in marriage. The Tepanteohuatzin granted the request, in a reply to the address, exhorting his pupil to a perseverance in virtue, and the fulfillment of all the duties of the married state.

Amongst the different orders or congregations both of men and women, who dedicated themselves to the worship of some particular gods, that of Quetzalcoatl is worthy to be mentioned. The life led in the colleges or monasteries of either sex, which were devoted to this imaginary god, was uncommonly rigid and austere. The dress of the order was extremely decent; they bathed regularly

regularly at midnight, and watched until about two hours before day, singing hymns to their god, and observing many rules of an austere life. They were at liberty to go to the mountains at any hour of the day or night, to spill their blood; this was permitted them from a respect to the virtue which they were all thought to possess. The superiors of the monasteries bore also the name of Quetzalcoatl, and were persons of such high authority, that they visited none but the king when it was necessary. The members of this religious order were destined to it from their infancy. The parents of the child invited the superior to an entertainment, who usually deputed one of his subjects. The deputy brought the child to him, upon which he took the boy in his arms, and offered him with a prayer to Quetzalcoatl, and put a collar about his neck, which was to be worn until he was seven years old. When the boy completed his second year, the superior made a small incision in his breast, which, like the collar, was another mark of his destination. As soon as the boy attained his seventh year, he entered into the monastery, having first heard a long discourse from his parents, in which they advertised him of the vow which they had made to Quetzalcoatl, and exhorted him to fulfil it, to behave well, to submit himself to his prelate, and to pray to the gods for his parents and the whole nation. This order was called *Tlamacazcajtli*, and the members of it *Tlamacazque*.

Another order which was called *Telpochtliztli*, or the youths, on account of its being composed of youths and boys, was consecrated to Tezcatlipoca. This was also a destination from infancy, attended with almost the same ceremonies as that of Quetzalcoatl; however, they did not live together in one community, but each

individual had his own home. In every district of the city they had a superior, who governed them, and a house where they assembled at sun-set to dance and sing the praises of their god. Both sexes met at this dance, but without committing the smallest disorder, owing to the vigilance of the superiors, and the rigour with which all misdemeanours were punished.

Among the Totonacas was an order of monks devoted to their goddess Centeotl. They lived in great retirement and austerity, and their life, excepting their superstition and vanity, was perfectly unimpeachable. None but men above sixty years of age who were widowers, estranged from all commerce with women, and of virtuous life, were admitted into this monastery. Their number was fixed, and when any one died another was received in his stead. These monks were so much esteemed, that they were not only consulted by the common people, but likewise by the first nobility and the high-priest. They listened to consultations sitting upon their heels, with their eyes fixed upon the ground, and their answers were received like oracles even by the kings of Mexico. They were employed in making historical paintings, which they gave to the high-priest that he might exhibit them to the people.

But the most important duty of the priesthood, and the chief ceremony of the religion of the Mexicans, consisted in the sacrifices which they made occasionally to obtain any favour from heaven, or in gratitude for those favours which they had already received. This is a subject which we would willingly pass over, if the laws of history permitted, to prevent the disgust which the description of such abominable acts of cruelty must cause to our readers; for although there has hardly been a  
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nation which has not practised similar sacrifices, it would be difficult to find one which has carried them to so great an excess as the Mexicans appear to have done.

We are ignorant what sort of sacrifices may have been practised by the ancient Toltecas. The Chechemecas continued long without using them, having at first neither idols, temples, nor priests, nor offering any thing to their gods, the Sun and Moon, but herbs, flowers, fruits, and copal. Those nations never thought of sacrificing human victims, until the example of the Mexicans banished the first impressions of nature from their minds. What they report touching the origin of such barbarous sacrifices we have already explained; namely, that which appears in their history concerning the first sacrifice of the four Xochimilcan prisoners which they made when in Colhuacan. It is probable, that at the time when the Mexicans were insulated in the lake, and particularly while they remained subject to the dominion of the Tepanecas, the sacrifice of human victims must have happened very seldom, as they neither had prisoners, nor could purchase slaves for sacrifices. But when they had enlarged their dominions, and multiplied their victories, sacrifices became frequent and on some festivals the victims were numerous.

The sacrifices varied with respect to the number, place, and mode, according to the circumstances of the festival. In general the victims suffered death by having their breasts opened; but others were drowned in the lake, others died of hunger shut up in caverns of the mountains, and lastly, some fell in the gladiatorian sacrifice. The customary place was the temple, in the upper area of which stood the altar destined for ordinary sacrifices. The altar of the greater temple of Mexico

ico was a green stone (probably jasper) convex above, and about three feet high, and as many broad, and more than five feet long. The usual ministers of the sacrifice were six priests, the chief of whom was the *Topiltzin*, whose dignity was pre-eminent and hereditary; but at every sacrifice he assumed the name of that god to whom it was made. For the performance of this function, he was clothed in a red habit, similar in make to the scapulary of the moderns, fringed with cotton; on his head he wore a crown of green and yellow feathers, at his ears hung golden ear-rings and green jewels, (perhaps emeralds), and at his under-lip a pendant of turquoise. The other five ministers were dressed in white habits of the same make, but embroidered with black; their hair was wrapped up, their heads were bound with leathern thongs, their foreheads armed with little shields of paper painted of various colours, and their bodies dyed all over black. These barbarous ministers carried the victim entirely naked to the upper area of the temple, and after having pointed out to the bystanders the idol to whom the sacrifice was made, that they might pay their adoration to it, extended him upon the altar; four priests held his legs and arms, and another kept his head firm with a wooden instrument made in form of a coiled serpent, which was put about his neck; and on account of the altar being convex, the body of the victim lay arched, the breast and belly being raised up and totally prevented from the least movement. The inhuman *Topiltzin* then approached, and with a cutting knife made of flint, dexterously opened his breast and tore out his heart, which, while yet palpitating, he offered to the sun, and afterwards threw it at the feet of the idol; then

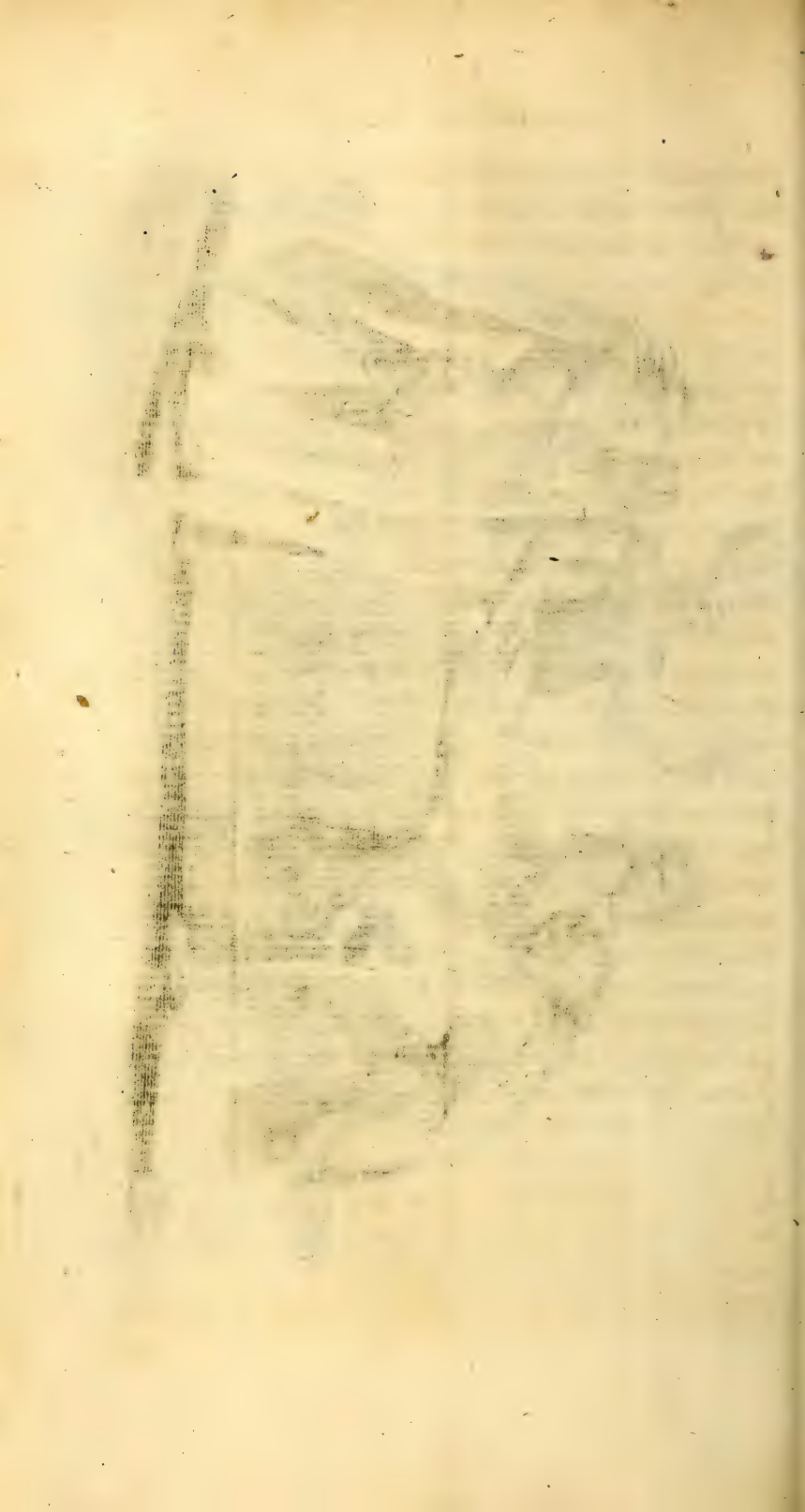




Lawson sc.

Engraved by H. Brown.





then taking it up again he offered it to the idol itself, and afterwards burned it, preserving the ashes with the utmost veneration. If the idol was gigantic and hollow, it was usual to introduce the heart of the victim into its mouth with a golden spoon. It was customary also to anoint the lips of the idol and the cornices of the door of the sanctuary with the victim's blood. If he was a prisoner of war, as soon as he was sacrificed they cut off his head to preserve the skull, and threw the body down the stairs to the lower area, where it was taken up by the officer or soldier to whom the prisoner had belonged, and carried to his house to be boiled and dressed as an entertainment for his friends. If he was not a prisoner of war, but a slave purchased for a sacrifice, the proprietor carried off the carcass from the altar for the same purpose. They eat only the legs, thighs, and arms, and burned the rest, or preserved it for food to the wild beasts or birds of prey which were kept in the royal palaces. The Otomies, after having killed the victim, tore the body in pieces, which they sold at market. The Zapotecas sacrificed men to their gods, women to their goddesses, and children to some other diminutive deities.

This was the most common mode of sacrifice, but often attended with some circumstances of still greater cruelty, as we shall see hereafter; other kinds of sacrifices which they used were much less frequent. At the festival of *Teteoinan*, the woman who represented this goddess was beheaded on the shoulders of another woman. At the festival of the arrival of the gods, they put the victims to death by fire. At one of the festivals made in honour of Tlaloc, they sacrificed two children of both sexes by drowning them in a certain place of  
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the lake. At another festival of the same god, they purchased three little boys of six or seven years of age, shut them up inhumanly in a cavern, and left them to die of fear and hunger.

The most celebrated sacrifice among the Mexicans was that called by the Spaniards with much propriety *the gladiatorian*. This was a very honourable death, and only prisoners who were renowned for their bravery were permitted to die by it. Near to the greater temple of large cities, in an open space of ground sufficient to contain an immense croud of people, was a round terrace, eight feet high, upon which was placed a large round stone, resembling a mill-stone in figure, but greatly larger, and almost three feet high, well polished, with figures cut upon it (*n*). On this stone, which was called the *Temalacatl*, the prisoner was placed, armed with a shield and a short sword, and tied by one foot. A Mexican officer or soldier, better accoutred in arms, mounted to combat with him. Every one will be able to imagine the efforts made by the desperate victim to defend his life, and also those of the Mexican to save his honour and reputation, before the multitude of people that assembled at such a spectacle. If the prisoner remained vanquished, immediately a priest named *Chalchiuhtepehua*, carried him dead or alive to the altar of the common sacrifices, opened his breast, and took out his heart, while the victor was applauded by the assembly, and rewarded by the king with some military honour. But if the prisoner conquered six different combatants, who came successively to fight with him,

(*n*) The form of the edifices represented in the plate of the gladiatorian sacrifice is a mere caprice of the designer; there never was any thing else than the terrace and the battlements.





A. Lawson sculp<sup>t</sup>

Printed by J. C. Brown



*U. Gladiatorian Sacrifice.*



*A. Lawson, sculp.*





him, agreeably to the account given by the conqueror Cortes, he was granted his life, his liberty, and all that had been taken from him, and returned with glory to his native country (*o*). The same author relates, that in a battle between the Cholulans and Huexotzincas, the principal lord of Cholula grew so warm in the contest, that having inadvertently removed to a great distance from his own people he was made prisoner in spite of his bravery, and conducted to Huexotzinco, where being put upon the gladiatorial stone, he conquered seven combatants which were opposed to him, and gained his liberty; but the Huexotzincas foreseeing, that on account of his singular courage he would become the cause of many disasters to them if they granted him his liberty, put him to death contrary to universal custom; by which act they rendered themselves eternally infamous among those nations.

With respect to the number of the victims which were annually sacrificed we can affirm nothing; the opinions of historians on that head being extremely different (*p*).  
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(*o*) Several historians say, that when the first combatant was overcome the prisoner became free; but we are rather inclined to credit the Conqueror; for it is not probable, that they would liberate a prisoner for so small a risk who might still prove destructive to them, or that they would deprive their gods of a victim so acceptable to their cruelty.

(*p*) Zumarraga, the first bishop of Mexico, says, in a letter of the 12th of June, 1531, addressed to the general chapter of his order, that in that capital alone twenty thousand human victims were annually sacrificed. Some authors, quoted by Gomara, affirm, that the number of the sacrificed amounted to fifty thousand. Acosta writes, that there was a certain day of the year on which five thousand were sacrificed in different places of the empire; and another day on which they sacrificed twenty thousand. Some authors believe, that on the mountain Tepeyacac alone, twenty thousand were sacrificed to the goddess Tonantzin. Torquemada, in quoting, though unfaithfully, the letter of Zumarraga, says, that there were twenty thousand infants annually sacrificed. But on the contrary, Las Casas, in his refutation of the bloody book, written by  
Dr.

The number of twenty thousand, which is conjectured to approach the nearest to truth, does not appear to us improbable, if we include in it all the victims which were sacrificed throughout the whole empire; but if that number comprehends, as some historians assert, the infants only, or the victims which were sacrificed on the mountain Tepeyacac, or in the capital, we think it altogether incredible. It is certain, that the number of sacrifices was not limited, but always proportioned either to the number of prisoners which were made in war, to the necessities of the state, or the nature of the festivals, as appears from the dedication of the greater temple of Mexico, on which occasion the cruelty of the Mexicans exceeded all bounds of belief. It is not, however, to be doubted, that the sacrifices were very numerous; the conquests of the Mexicans having been extremely rapid, and as their aim in war was not so much to kill as to make prisoners of the enemy for this purpose. If to these victims we add the slaves which were purchased for the same end, and many criminals who were condemned to expiate their crimes by the sacrifice of their lives, we shall find the number greatly exceed that computed by Las Casas, who was too anxious to exculpate the Americans of all the excesses of which they were accused by the Spaniards (*q*). The sacrifices multiplied in *Divine* years, and still more in *Secular* years.

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Dr. Sepulveda, reduces the sacrifices to so small a number, that we are left to believe, they amounted not to fifty, or at most not to a hundred. We are strongly of opinion, that all these authors have erred in the number, Las Casas by diminution, the rest by exaggeration of the truth.

(*q*) We cannot account why Las Casas, who, in his writings makes use of the testimony of Zumarraga, and other churchmen, against the conquerors, should afterwards so openly contradict them respecting the number of the sacrifices.



The Mexicans were accustomed at their festivals to clothe the victim in the same dress and badges in which they dressed that god to whom the sacrifice was made; thus habited, the victim went round the city demanding alms for the temple, accompanied with a guard of soldiers. If any one accidentally made his escape, the corporal of the guard was substituted in his stead as a punishment for his carelessness. They used also to feed and fatten the victims, as they did several animals for the table.

The religion of the Mexicans was not confined to these sacrifices; offerings were made of various kinds of animals. They sacrificed quails and falcons to their god Huitzilopochtli, and hares, rabbits, deer, and coyotos, to their god Mixcoatl. They daily made an offering of quails to the sun. Every day as the sun was about to rise, several priests, standing on the upper area of the temple, with their faces towards the east, each with a quail in his hand, saluted that luminary's appearance with music, and made an offering of the quails after cutting off their heads. This sacrifice was succeeded by the burning of incense, with a loud accompaniment of musical instruments.

In acknowledgment of the power of their gods, they also made offerings of various kinds of plants, flowers, jewels, gums, and other inanimate substances. To their gods Tlaloc and Coatlicue they offered the first-blown flowers; and to Centeotl, the first maize of every year. They made oblations of bread, various pastes, and ready dressed victuals in such abundance, as to be sufficient to supply all the ministers of the temple. Every morning were seen at the foot of the altars innumerable dishes and porringers of boiling food, that the steams arising

from them might reach the nostrils of the idols, and nourish their immortal gods.

The most frequent oblation, however, was that of copal. All daily burned incense to their idols ; no house was without censers. The priests in the temple, fathers of families in their houses, and judges in their tribunals, whenever they pronounced sentence in an important cause, whether civil or criminal, offered incense to the four principal winds. But incense-offering among the Mexicans, and other nations of Anahuac, was not only an act of religion towards their gods, but also a piece of civil courtesy to lords and ambassadors.

The superstition and cruelties of the Mexicans were imitated by all the nations which they conquered, or that were contiguous to the empire, without any difference, except that the number of sacrifices amongst those nations was less, and that particular circumstances sometimes attended them. The Tlascalans, at one of their festivals, fixed a prisoner to a high cross, and shot arrows at him ; and upon another occasion, they tied a prisoner to a low cross, and killed him by the bastinado.

The sacrifices celebrated every fourth year by the Quauhtitlans in honour of the god of fire, were inhuman and dreadful. A day before the festival, they planted six very lofty trees in the under area of the temple, sacrificed two slaves, stripped their skins off, and took out the bones of their thighs. The next day two eminent priests, clothed themselves in the bloody skins, took the bones in their hands, and descended with solemn steps and dismal howlings, down the stairs of the temple. The people who were assembled in crowds below, called out in a loud voice, " Behold there come our gods." As soon as they reached the lower area, they

they began a dance to the sound of musical instruments, which lasted the greatest part of the day. In the meanwhile, the people sacrificed an incredible quantity of quails, the number of them being never less than eight thousand. When these sacrifices were over, the priests carried six prisoners to the tops of the trees, and after tying them there, descended; but they had hardly time to reach the ground, before the unhappy victims were pierced with a multitude of arrows. The priests mounted again to cut down the dead bodies, and let them drop from the height; immediately their breasts were opened, and their hearts torn out, according to the custom of those people. The victims as well as the quails were shared among the priests and nobles of that city, for the banquets which crowned their barbarous and detestable festival.

While they were thus cruel to others, it is not wonderful that they likewise practised inhumanity towards themselves. Being accustomed to bloody sacrifices of their prisoners, they also failed not to shed abundance of their own blood, conceiving the streams which flowed from their victims insufficient to quench the diabolical thirst of their gods. It makes one shudder to read the austerities which they exercised upon themselves, either in atonement of their transgressions, or in preparation for their festivals. They mangled their flesh as if it had been insensible, and let their blood run in such profusion, that it appeared to be a superfluous fluid of the body.

The effusion of blood was frequent and daily with some of the priests, to which practice they gave the name of *Tlamacazqui*. They pierced themselves with the sharpest spines of the aloe, and bored several parts  
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of their bodies, particularly their ears, lips, tongue, and the fat of their arms and legs. Through the holes which they made with these spines, they introduced pieces of cane, the first of which were small pieces, but every time this penitential suffering was repeated, a thicker piece was used. The blood which flowed from them was carefully collected in leaves of the plant *acxojatl* (*r*). They fixed the bloody spines in little balls of hay, which they exposed upon the battlements of the walls of the temple, to testify the penance which they did for the people. Those who exercised such severities upon themselves within the inclosure of the greater temple of Mexico, bathed themselves in a pond that was formed there, which from being always tinged with blood was called *Ezāpan*. There was a certain fixed number of canes to be made use of on this occasion, which, after being once used were preserved as attestations of their penitence. Besides those and other austere practices of which we shall treat shortly, watching and fasting was very frequent amongst the Mexicans. A festival hardly occurred for which they did not prepare themselves with fasting for some days, more or less, according to the prescriptions of their ritual. From all that is to be inferred from their history, their fasting consisted in abstaining from flesh and wine, and in eating but once a day; this some did at mid-day, others after that time, and some tasted nothing till evening. Fasting was generally accompanied with watching and the effusion of blood, and then no person was permitted to have commerce with any woman, not even with his own wife.

Some

(*r*) *Acxojatl* is a tree of several upright stems, with long leaves, which are strong and symmetrically disposed. They made formerly and still make excellent brooms of this plant.

Some fasts were general and observed by the whole people; namely, the fast of five days before the festival of Mixcoatl, which was observed even by children; the fast of four days before the festival of Tezcatlipoca, and also as we suspect, that which was made previous to the festival of the sun (s). During this fast the king retired into a certain place of the temple, where he watched and shed blood, according to the custom of his nation. Any other fasts bound only particular individuals, such as that which was observed by the proprietors of victims the day before a sacrifice. The proprietors of prisoners which were sacrificed to the god Xipe, fasted twenty days. The nobles as well as the king had a house within the precincts of the temple, containing numerous chambers, where they occasionally retired to do penance. On one of the festivals, all those persons who exercised public offices, after their daily duty was over, retired there at evening for this purpose. In the third month the Tlamacazqui, or penance-doers watched every night; and in the fourth month they were attended in their duty by the nobility.

In Mixteca, where there were many monasteries, the first-born sons of lords, before they took possession of their estates, were subjected to a rigorous penance during a whole year. They conducted the heir with a numerous attendance to a monastery, where they stripped off his garments, and clothed him in rags daubed over with *olli*, or elastic gum, rubbed his face, belly, and back, with stinking herbs, and delivered a small lance of *itztli* to

(s) The fast which was held in honour of the sun was called *Netonatiubzabualo*, or *Netonatiubzabualitzli*. Dr. Hernandez says, it was held every two hundred, or three hundred days. We suspect that it was kept on the day *I Olin*, which occurred every two hundred and sixty days.

to him, that he might draw his own blood. They restricted him to a very abstemious diet, subjected him to the hardest labours, and punished him severely for any failure in duty. At the end of the year, after being washed and cleansed by four girls, with sweet scented water, he was reconducted to his house with great pomp and music.

In the principal temple of Teohuacan, four priests constantly resided, who were famous for the austerity of their lives. Their dress was the same with that of the common people; their diet was limited to a loaf of maize of about two ounces in weight, and a cup of *atolli*, or gruel, made of the same grain. Every night two of them kept watch, employing their time in singing hymns to their gods, in offering incense, which they did four times during the night, and in shedding their blood upon the stones of the temple. Their fasting was continual during the four years which they persevered in that life, except upon days of festival, one of which happened every month, when they were at liberty to eat as much as they pleased; but in preparation for every festival, they practised the usual austere rules, boring their ears with the spines of the aloe, and passing little pieces of cane through the holes to the number of sixty, all of which differed in thickness in the manner above mentioned. At the end of four years, other four priests were introduced to lead the same kind of life; and if before the completion of that term any one of them happened to die, another was substituted in his place, that the number might never be incomplete. These priests were so high in respect and esteem as to be held in veneration even by the kings of Mexico; but woe unto him who violated his chastity; for, if after a strict examination



mination the crime was proved, he was killed by bastinados, his body was burned, and his ashes scattered to the winds.

Upon occasion of any public calamity, the Mexican high-priest always observed a most extraordinary fast. For this purpose he retired to a wood, where he constructed a hut for himself, covered with branches, which were always fresh and green; as whenever the first became dry, new ones were spread in their place. Shut up in this hut he passed nine or ten months in constant prayer and frequent effusions of blood, deprived of all communication with men, and without any other food than raw maize and water. This fast was not indispensable, nor did all the high-priests observe it; nor did those who attempted it ever do it more than once in their lives; and certainly it is not probable, that those who survived so rigorous and long an abstinence, were ever able to repeat it.

The fast observed by the Tlascalans every divine year, at which period they made a most solemn festival in honour of their god *Camaxtle*, was likewise very singular. When the time of commencing it was arrived, all the *Tlamacazquis* were assembled by their chief *Arch-cauhitli*, who made them a serious and grave exhortation to penitence, and forewarned them if any one of them should find that he was incapable of performing it, that he should declare so within five days; for that if, after that space of time was elapsed, and the fast was once begun, he should happen to fail and renounce the attempt, he would be deemed unworthy of the company of the gods, his priesthood would be taken from him, and his estate sequestered. At the expiration of the five days, which was allowed for the purpose of deliberation,

ration, the chief, attended by all those who had courage to attempt this penitential duty, the number of whom used to exceed two hundred, ascended the very lofty mountain Matlalcueje, on the top of which was a sanctuary, consecrated to the goddesses of water. The *Archcaubtli* mounted to the top to make his oblation of gems, precious feathers, and copal, while the others waited in the middle of the ascent, praying their goddesses to give them strength and courage to go through their penance. They afterwards descended from the mountain, and caused a number of little knives of itztli, and a great quantity of small rods of different thickneses to be made. The labourers upon those instruments fasted five days before they began their work, and if any little knife or rod happened to break, it was accounted a bad omen, and the workman was considered to have broke the fast. The Tlamacazqui then began their fast, which did not last less than one hundred and sixty days. The first day they bored holes in their tongues, through which they drew the little rods, and notwithstanding the excessive pain and loss of blood which they suffered, they were obliged all the while to sing aloud songs to their god, and every twenty days this cruel operation was repeated. When the first eighty days of the fast of the priests were elapsed, a general fast, from which even the heads of the republic were not exempted, began with the people, and continued an equally long time. During this period, no person was allowed to bathe, nor to eat pepper, which was the usual seasoning of all their dishes. To such excesses and cruelty did fanaticism carry those nations.

All that we have hitherto related does not so much make known the religion of the Mexicans, and the extravagance

travagance of their horrible superstition, as the number of their festivals, and the rites which were observed at them; in order the better to understand this subject, it is necessary to attend to their mode of dividing time, and the method which they adopted to measure days, months, years, and centuries as already stated. What we have communicated on this head has been carefully investigated and certified by intelligent men, who are worthy of the utmost credit, who have applied with the utmost assiduity to this study, and who have diligently examined the ancient paintings, and obtained information from the best instructed persons among the Mexicans and Acolhuans. We are particularly indebted to the religious missionaries Motolinia and Sahagun, from whose writings Torquemada has taken all that is valuable in his work, and to the very learned Mexican D. Carlo Siguenza, whose opinions we have found to be just and accurate by the examination which we have made of several Mexican paintings, in which months, years, and centuries, are distinctly represented by their proper figures.

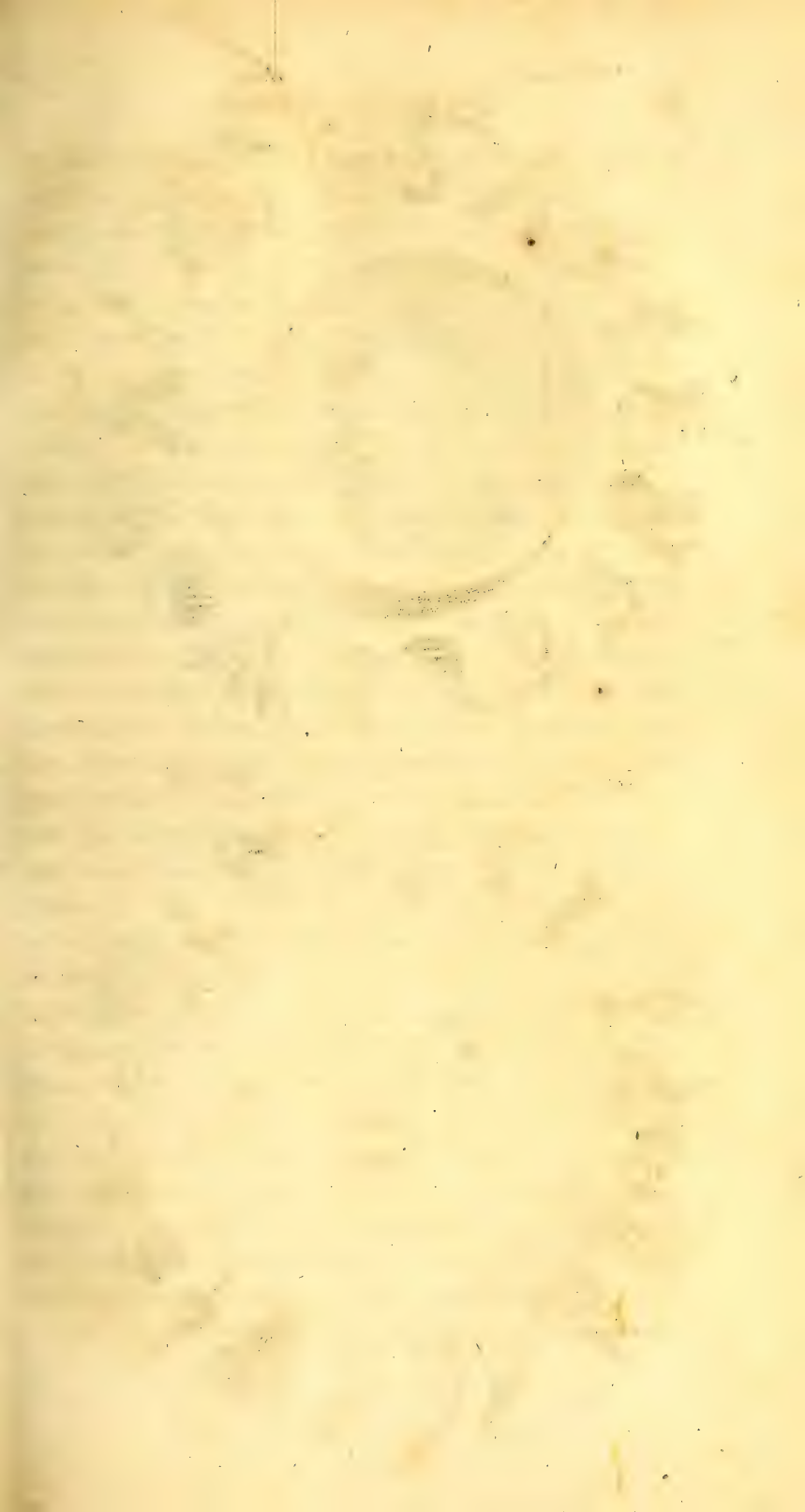
Boturini affirms, that a hundred and more years before the Christian era, the Toltecas adjusted their calendar, by adding one day every four years, and that they continued to do so for several centuries, until the Mexicans established the method we have mentioned: that the cause of the new method was, that two festivals concurred upon the same day; the one the moveable festival of Tezcatlipoca, the other that of Huitzilopochtli, which was fixed; and that the Colhuan nation had celebrated the latter, and passed over the former; upon which Tezcatlipoca in anger predicted, that the monarchy of Colhuacan would soon be dissolved; that



the worship of the ancient gods of the nation would cease, and that it would remain confined to the worship of one sole divinity, which was never seen nor understood, and subjected to the power of certain strangers who would arrive from distant countries; that the kings of Mexico being made acquainted with this prediction, ordered, that whenever two festivals concurred upon the same day, the principal festival was to be celebrated on such day, and the other on the day after; and that the day which was usually added every four years, should be omitted; and that at the end of the century, the thirteen days should be added instead of them. But we are not willing to give credit to this account.

Two things must appear truly strange in the Mexican system, the one is, that they did not regulate their months by the changes of the moon; the other that they used no particular character to distinguish one century from another. But with respect to the first, we do not mean that their astronomical months did not accord with the lunar periods; because we know that their year was justly regulated by the sun, and because they used the same name, which was *Metztli*, indifferently for month or moon. The month now mentioned by us is their religious month, according to which they observed the celebration of festivals, and practised divination; not their astronomical month, of which we know nothing unless that it was divided into two periods, that is, into the period of the *watching*, and into that of the *sleep* of the moon. We are however persuaded, that they must have made use of some characters to distinguish one century from another, as this distinction was so very easy and necessary; but we have not been able to ascertain this upon the authority of any historian.

The



Mexican

Year



Mexican

Month



Lawson & Co.



The distribution of the signs or characters, both of days and years, served the Mexicans as superstitious prognostics, according to which they predicted the good or bad fortune of infants from the sign under which they were born; and the happiness or misfortune of marriages, the success of wars, and of every other thing from the day on which they were undertaken or put in execution; and on this account also they considered not only the peculiar character of every day and year, but likewise the ruling character of every period of days or years; for the first sign or character of every period, was the ruling sign through the whole of it. Of merchants we find, that whenever they wished to undertake any journey, they endeavoured to begin it on some day of that period, during which the sign Coatl (serpent) ruled, and then they promised themselves much success in their commerce. Those persons who were born under the sign *Quauhtli* (eagle), were suspected to prove mockers and slanderers, if they were males; if females, loquacious and impudent. The concurrence of the year with the day of the Rabbit was esteemed the most fortunate season.

To represent a month they painted a circle or wheel, divided into twenty figures signifying twenty days, as appears in the plate we have given, which is a copy from one published by Valadès, in his *Rettorica Cristiana*, and the only one hitherto published. To represent the year they painted another, which they divided into eighteen figures of the eighteen months, and frequently painted within the wheel the image of the moon. The representation which we have given of this image, was taken from that published by Gemelli, which was a copy from an ancient painting in the possession of Dr. Siguenza.

guenza (*b*). The century was represented by a wheel divided into fifty-two figures, or rather by four figures, which were thirteen times designed. They used to paint a serpent twisted about the wheel, which pointed out by four twists of its body the four principal winds, and the beginnings of the four periods of thirteen years. The wheel which we here present, is a copy of two others, one of which was published by Valadès, and the other by Gemelli, within which we have represented the sun, as was generally done by the Mexicans. In another place we shall explain the figures of these wheels in order to satisfy our curious readers.

The method adopted by the Mexicans to compute months, years, and centuries, was, as we have already mentioned, common to all the polished nations of Anahuac, without any variation among them except in the names and figures (*c*). The Chiapanese, who, among the tributaries to the crown of Mexico, were the most distant from the capital; instead of the names and the figures of the Rabbit, the Cane, Flint, and House, made use of the names *Votan*, *Lambat*, *Been*, and *Chin-an*, and instead of the names of the Mexican days, they adopted the names of twenty illustrious men among their ancestors, among which the four names above mentioned, occupied the same place that the names Rabbit, Cane, Flint, and House, held amongst the Mexican

(*b*) Three copies of the Mexican year have been published. The first that of Valadès, the second that of Siguenza, published by Gemelli, and the third that of Boturini, published at Mexico, in 1770. In that of Siguenza, within the wheel of the century, appears that of the year; and in that of Valadès, within both wheels, that of the month is represented. We have separated them to make them more intelligible.

(*c*) Boturini says, that the Indians of the diocese of Guaxaca made their year consist of thirteen months; but it must have been their astronomical or civil year, and not their religious year.







## Mexican Century.



Lucas J.





Mexican days. The Chiapanese names of the twenty days of the month were the following :

|                          |                     |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. <i>Mox.</i>           | 11. <i>Batz.</i>    |
| 2. <i>Igh.</i>           | 12. <i>Enob.</i>    |
| 3. <i>VOTAN.</i>         | 13. <i>BEEN.</i>    |
| 4. <i>Ghanan.</i>        | 14. <i>Hix.</i>     |
| 5. <i>Abagh.</i>         | 15. <i>Tziquin.</i> |
| 6. <i>Tox.</i>           | 16. <i>Chabin.</i>  |
| 7. <i>Moxic.</i>         | 17. <i>Chix.</i>    |
| 8. <i>LAMBAT.</i>        | 18. <i>CHINAX.</i>  |
| 9. <i>Mòlo, or Mùlu.</i> | 19. <i>Cabogh.</i>  |
| 10. <i>Elah.</i>         | 20. <i>Aghual.</i>  |

There was no month in which the Mexicans did not celebrate some festival or other, which was either fixed and established to be held on a certain day of the month, or moveable, from being annexed to some signs which did not correspond with the same days in every year. The principal moveable festivals, according to Boturini, were sixteen in number, among which the fourth was that of the god of wine, and the thirteenth, that of the god of fire. With respect to those festivals which were fixed, we shall mention as concisely as possible, as much as we judge will be sufficient to convey a competent idea of the religion and the superstitious disposition of the Mexicans.

On the second day of the first month, they made a great festival to Tlaloc, accompanied with sacrifices of children, which were purchased for that purpose, and a gladiatorian sacrifice ; these children, which were purchased, were not sacrificed all at once, but successively so, in the course of three months, which corresponded to those of March and April, to obtain from this god the rains which were necessary for their maize.

On

On the first day of the second month, which, in the first year of their century, corresponded to the 18th of March (*d*), they made a most solemn festival to the god Xipe, the sacrifices offered at which were extremely cruel. They dragged the victims by their hair to the upper area of the temple, where, after they were sacrificed in the usual manner, they skinned them, and the priests clothed themselves in their skins, and appeared for some days in these bloody coverings. The owners of prisoners that were sacrificed, were bound to fast for twenty days, after which they made great banquets, at which they dressed the flesh of the victims. The stealers of gold or silver were sacrificed along with prisoners, the law of the kingdom having ordained that punishment for them. The circumstance of skinning the victims, obtained to this month the name of *Tlacaxipehualiztli*, or the skinning of men. At this festival, the military went through several exercises of arms and practices of war, and the nobles celebrated with songs the glorious actions of their ancestors. In Tlascala, the nobles, as well as the plebeians had dances, at which they were all dressed in skins of animals, and embroidery of gold and silver. On account of these dances, which were common to all ranks of people, they gave the festival as well as the month the name of *Coailhuatl*, or the general festival.

In the third month, which began on the 7th of April, the second festival of Tlaloc was celebrated with the sacrifice of some children. The skins of the victims which were sacrificed to the god Xipe, in the preceding month, were carried in procession to a temple called

*Tepico,*

(*d*) Whenever we mention the correspondence of the Mexican months with ours, it is to be understood of those of the first year of their century.

*Tepico*, which was within the inclosure of the greater temple, and there deposited in a cave. In this same month the *Xochimanqui*, or those who traded in flowers, celebrated the festival of their goddess Coatlicue, and presented her garlands of flowers curiously woven. But before this offering was made, no person was allowed to smell these flowers. The ministers of the temples watched every night of this month, and on that account made great fires; hence the month took the name of *Tozoztonli*, or little watch.

The fourth month was called *Hueitozoztli*, or great watch; because, during this month, not only the priests, but also the nobility and populace, kept watch. They drew blood from their ears, eye-brows, nose, tongue, arms, and thighs, to expiate the faults committed by their senses, and exposed at their doors leaves of the sword-grass, coloured with blood, but with no other intention, probably, than to make ostentation of their penance. In this manner they prepared themselves for the festival of the goddess Centeotl, which was celebrated with sacrifices of human victims and animals, particularly of quails, and with many warlike exercises, which they performed before the temple of this goddess. Little girls carried ears of maize to the temple, and after offering them to that false divinity, carried them to granaries, in order that these ears, thus hallowed, might preserve all the rest of the grain from any destructive insect. This month commenced on the 27th of April.

The fifth month, which began upon the 17th of May, was almost wholly festival. The first, which was one of the four principal festivals of the Mexicans, was that which they made in honour of their great god Tezcatlipocà.



catlipoca. Ten days before it a priest dressed himself in the same habit and badges which distinguished that god, and went out of the temple with a bunch of flowers in his hands, and a little flute of clay which made a very shrill sound. Turning his face first towards the east, and afterwards to the other three principal winds, he sounded the flute loudly, and then taking up a little dust from the earth with his finger, he put it to his mouth and swallowed it. Upon hearing the sound of the flute, all kneeled down; criminals were thrown into the utmost terror and consternation, and with tears implored that god to grant a pardon to their transgressions, and hinder them from being discovered and detected; warriors prayed to him for courage and strength against the enemies of the nation, successful victories, and a multitude of prisoners for sacrifices; and all the rest of the people, using the same ceremony of taking up and eating the dust, supplicated with fervour the clemency of the gods. The sound of the little flute was repeated every day until the festival. One day before it, the lords carried a new habit to the idol, which the priests immediately put upon it, and kept the old one as a relique in some repository of the temple; they adorned the idol with particular ensigns of gold and beautiful feathers, and raised up the tapestry, which always covered the entrance of the sanctuary, that the image of their god might be seen and adored by the multitude. When the day of the festival arrived, the people flocked to the lower area of the temple. Some priests painted black, and dressed in a similar habit with the idol, carried it aloft upon a litter, which the youths and virgins of the temple, bound with thick cords of wreaths of crisp maize, and put one of these wreaths round the neck, and a garland on the head

head of the idol. This cord, the emblem of drought, which they desired to prevent, was called *Toxcatl*, which name was likewise given to the month on account of this ceremony. All the youths and virgins of the temple, as well as the nobles of the court, carried similar wreaths about their necks and in their hands. Then followed a procession through the lower area of the temple, where flowers and odoriferous herbs were scattered; two priests offered incense to the idol, which two others carried upon their shoulders. In the mean while the people kept kneeling, striking their backs with thick knotted cords. When the procession finished, and also their discipline, they carried back the idol to the altar, and made abundant offerings to it of gold, gems, flowers, feathers, animals, and provisions, which were prepared by the virgins and other women, who, on account of some particular vow, assisted for that day in the service of the temple. These provisions were carried in procession by the same virgins, who were led by a respectable priest, dressed in a strange fantastical habit, and lastly the youths carried them to the habitations of the priests for whom they had been prepared.

Afterwards they made the sacrifice of the victim representing the god Tezcatlipoca. This victim was the handsomest and best shaped youth of all the prisoners. They selected him a year before the festival, and during that whole time he was always dressed in a similar habit with the idol; he was permitted to go round the city, but always accompanied by a strong guard, and was adored every where, as the living image of that supreme divinity. Twenty days before the festival, this youth married four beautiful girls, and on the five days preceding the festival, they gave him sumptuous entertain-

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ments, and allowed him all the pleasures of life. On the day of the festival, they led him with a numerous attendance to the temple of Tezcatlipoca, but before they came there they dismissed his wives. He accompanied the idol in the procession, and when the hour of sacrifice was come, they stretched him upon the altar, and the high priest with great reverence opened his breast and pulled out his heart. His body was not, like the bodies of other victims, thrown down the stairs, but carried in the arms of the priests and beheaded at the bottom of the temple. His head was strung up in the *Tzompantli*, among the rest of the skulls of the victims which were sacrificed to Tezcatlipoca, and his legs and arms were dressed and prepared for the tables of the lords. After the sacrifice, a grand dance took place of the collegiate youths and nobles who were present at the festival. At sun-set, the virgins of the temple made a new offering of bread baked with honey. This bread, with some other things unknown to us, was put before the altar of Tezcatlipoca, and was destined to be the reward of the youths who should be the victors in the race which they made down the stairs of the temple; they were also rewarded with a garment, and received the praise and applause of the priests as well as the people who were spectators. The festival was concluded by dismissing from the seminaries all the youths and virgins who were arrived at an age fit for marriage. The youths who remained, mocked the others with satirical and humorous raillery, and threw at them handfuls of rushes and other things, upbraiding them with leaving the service of god for the pleasures of matrimony; the priests always granting them indulgence in this emanation of youthful vivacity.



In this same fifth month, the first festival of Huitzilopochtli was celebrated. The priests made a statue of this god of the regular stature of a man ; they made the flesh of a heap of *Tzobualli*, which is a certain eatable plant, and the bones of the wood *Mizquitl*. They dressed it in cotton with a mantle of feathers ; put on its head a small parasol of paper, adorned with beautiful feathers, and above that a bloody little knife of flint-stone, upon its breast a plate of gold, and on its garment were several figures representing bones of the dead, and the image of a man torn in pieces ; by which they intended to signify either the power of this god in battle, or the terrible revenge, which, according to their mythology, he took against those who conspired against the honour and life of his mother. They put this statue in a litter made on four wooden serpents, which four principal officers of the Mexican army bore from the place where the statue was formed, into the altar where it was placed. Several youths forming a circle, and joining themselves together by means of arrows, which they laid hold of with their hands, the one by the head, the other by the point, carried before the litter a piece of paper more than fifteen perches long, on which, probably, the glorious actions of that false divinity were represented, and which they sung to the sound of musical instruments.

When the day of the festival was arrived, in the morning they made a great sacrifice of quails, which after their heads were twisted off, they threw at the foot of the altar. The first who made this sacrifice was the king, after him the priests, and lastly, the people. Of this great profusion of quails, one part was dressed for the king's table, and those of the priests, and the remainder was reserved for another occasion. Every person

son who was present at the festival, carried a clay censer, and a quantity of bitumen of Judea, to burn in offering to their god, and all the coal which was made use of was afterwards collected in a large stove called *Tlexictli*. On account of this ceremony they called this festival the *incensing of Huitzilopochtli*. Immediately after followed the dance of the virgins and priests. The virgins dyed their faces, their arms were adorned with red feathers, on their heads they wore garlands of crisp leaves of maize, and in their hands they bore canes which were cleft, with little flags of cotton or paper in them. The faces of the priests were dyed black, their foreheads bound with little shields of paper, and their lips daubed with honey, they covered their natural parts with paper, and each held a sceptre, at the extremity of which was a flower made of feathers, and above that another tuft of feathers. Upon the edge of the stove two men danced, bearing on their backs certain cages of pine. The priests in the course of their dancing, from time to time, touched the earth with the extremity of their sceptres, as if they rested themselves upon them. All these ceremonies had their particular signification, and the dance on account of the festival at which it took place was called *Toxcachocholla*. In another separate place, the court and military people danced. The musical instruments, which in some dances were placed in the centre, on this occasion were kept without and hid, so that the sound of them was heard but the musicians were unseen.

One year before this festival, the prisoner who was to be sacrificed to Huitzilopochtli, to which prisoner they gave the name of *Ixtéocale*, which signifies, *Wise Lord of Heaven*, was selected along with the victim for  
Tezcatlipoca.

Tezcatlipoca. Both of them rambled about the whole year; with this difference however, that the victim of Tezcatlipoca was adored, but not that of Huitzilopochtli. When the day of the festival was arrived, they dressed the prisoner in a curious habit of painted paper, and put on his head a mitre made of the feathers of an eagle, with a plume upon the top of it. He carried upon his back a small net, and over it a little bag, and in this dress he mingled himself in the dance of the courtiers. The most singular thing respecting this prisoner was, that although he was doomed to die on that day, yet he had the liberty of fixing the hour of the sacrifice himself. Whenever he chose he presented himself to the priests, in whose arms, and not upon the altar, the sacrificer broke his breast, and pulled out his heart. When the sacrifice was ended, the priests began a great dance, which continued all the remainder of the day, excepting some intervals, which they employed to repeat the incense-offerings. At this same festival, the priests made a slight cut on the breast and on the belly of all the children of both sexes which were born within one preceding year. This was the sign or character, by which the Mexican nation specially acknowledged itself consecrated to the worship of its protecting god; and this is also the reason why several authors have believed, that the rite of circumcision was established among the Mexicans (*e*). But if possibly the

(*e*) F. Acoſta ſays, that “i Meſſicani *ſacrificavano* ne’ lor fanciulli e l’orechie e il membro genitale nel che in qualche maniera contra facevano la circonciſione de’ Giudei.” But if this author ſpeaks of the true Mexicans, that is, the deſcendants of the ancient Aztecas who founded the city of Mexico, whoſe hiſtory we write, his aſſertion is abſolutely falſe; for after the moſt diligent ſearch and enquiry, there is not the ſmalleſt veſtige of ſuch a rite to be found among them.



the people of Yucatan and the Totonacas used this rite, it was never practised by the Mexicans, or any other nation of the empire.

In the sixth month, which began upon the sixth of June, the third festival of the god Tlaloc was celebrated. They strewed the temple in a curious manner with rushes from the lake of Citlaltepec. The priests who went to fetch them, committed various hostilities upon all passengers

them. If he speaks of the Totonacas, who by having been subjects of the king of Mexico, are, by several authors, called Mexicans, it is true, that they made such an incision on children.

The indecent and lying author of the work, entitled, "*Recherches Philosophiques sur les Americains*," adopts the account given by Acosta, and makes a long discourse on the origin of circumcision, which he believes to have been invented by the Egyptians, or the Ethiopians, to preserve themselves, as he says, from worms, which trouble inhabitants of the torrid zone who are not circumcised. He affirms, that the Hebrews learned it from the Egyptians, and that at first it was a mere physical remedy, but was afterwards by fanaticism constituted a religious ceremony: that the heat of the torrid zone is the cause of this disorder, and that the Mexicans, and other nations of America, in order to free themselves from it, adopted circumcision. But leaving aside the falseness of his principles, and his fondness to discuss minutely every subject which has any connexion with obscene pleasures, that we may attend to that only which concerns our history, we assert that no traces of the practice of circumcision have ever been found among the Mexicans, or among the nations subjected by them, except the Totonacas; nor did we ever hear of any such distemper of worms in these countries, though they are all situated under the torrid zone, and we visited for thirteen years all kinds of sick persons. Besides, if heat is the cause of such a distemper, it ought to have been more frequent in the native country of that author than in the inland provinces of Mexico, where the climate is more temperate. M. Maller, who is quoted by the same author, made no less a mistake; in his Discourse on Circumcision, inserted in the Encyclopedia, he, from not having understood the expressions of Acosta, believed that they cut the ears and the parts of generation, of all the Mexican children entirely off; in wonder at which he asks, if it was possible that many of them could remain alive after so cruel an operation? But if we had believed what M. Maller believed, we would rather have asked how there came to be any Mexicans at all in the world? That no future mistakes may be committed by those who read the ancient Spanish historians of America, it is necessary to be observed, that when these historians say that the Mexicans, or other nations *sacrificed* the tongue, the ears, or any other member of the body, all they mean by it is, that they made some slight incision in these members, and drew some blood from them.

gers whom they met in their way, plundering them of every thing they had about them, and sometimes even stripping them quite naked, and beating them if they made any resistance. With such impunity were these priests, turned assassins, favoured, that they not only robbed the common people, but even carried off the royal tributes from the collectors of them, if they chanced to meet with them, no private persons being allowed to make complaint against them, nor the king to punish them for such enormities. On the day of the festival, they all eat a certain kind of gruel which they called *Etzalli*, from which the month took the name of *Etzalqualiztli*. They carried to the temple a vast quantity of painted paper and elastic gum, with which they besmeared the paper and the cheeks of the idol. After this ridiculous ceremony, they sacrificed several prisoners who were clothed in habits the same with that of the god Tlaloc, and his companions, and in order to complete the scene of their cruelty, the priests, attended by a great croud of people, went in vessels to a certain place of the lake, where in former times there was a whirlpool, and there sacrificed two children of both sexes, by drowning them, along with the hearts of the prisoners who had been sacrificed at this festival, in order to obtain from their gods the necessary rains for their fields. Upon this occasion, those ministers of the temple, who, in the course of that year, had either been negligent in office, or convicted of some high misdemeanor which was not, however, deserving of capital punishment, were stripped of their priesthood, and received a chastisement similar to the trick which is practised on seamen the first time they pass the line, but more severe, as by being repeatedly ducked in the water they were at last so exhausted, it became necessary to carry them home to their houses to be recovered.

In

In the seventh month, which began upon the 26th of June, the festival of Huixtocihuatl, the goddess of salt, was celebrated. A day before the festival there was a great dance of women, who danced in a circle, joined to each other by strings or cords of different flowers, and wearing garlands of wormwood on their heads. A female prisoner, clothed in the habit of the idol of that goddess, was placed in the centre of the circle. The dancing was accompanied with singing, in both of which two old respectable priests took the lead. This dance continued the whole night, and in the morning after, the dance of the priests began, and lasted the whole day, without any other interruption than the sacrifice of prisoners. The priests wore decent garments, and held in their hands those beautiful yellow flowers which the Mexicans called *Cempoalxochitl*, and many Europeans *Indian Carnations*; at sun-set they made the sacrifice of the female prisoner, and concluded the festival with sumptuous banquets.

During the whole of this month the Mexicans made great rejoicings. They wore their best dresses; dances and amusements in their gardens were frequent; the poems which they sang were all on love, or some other equally pleasing subject. The populace went a hunting in the mountains, and the nobles used warlike exercises in the field, and sometimes in vessels upon the lake. These rejoicings of the nobility procured to this month the name of *Tecuilbuitl*, the festival of the lords, or of *Tecuilhuitontli*, the small festival of the lords, as it was truly so, in comparison of the festival of the following month.

In the eighth month, which began upon the 16th day of July, they made a solemn festival to the goddess

*Centeotl*,



*Centeotl*, under the name of *Xilonen*; for as we have already mentioned, they changed the name according to the state of the maize. On this festival they called her *Xilonen*; because the ear of maize, while the grain was still tender, was called *Xilotl*. The festival continued eight days, during which there was constant dancing in the temple of that goddess. On such days, the king and the nobles gave away meat and drink to the populace, both of which were placed in rows in the under area of the temple, and there the *Chiampinolli*, which was one of their most common drinks, was given, and also the *Tamalli*, which was paste of maize, made into small rolls, and also other provisions, of which we shall treat hereafter. Presents were made to the priests, and the nobles invited each other reciprocally to entertainments, and presented each other with gold, silver, beautiful feathers, and curious animals. They sung the glorious actions of their ancestors, and boasted of the nobleness and antiquity of their families. At sun-set, when the feasting of the populace was ended, the priests had their dance which continued four hours, and on that account there was a splendid illumination in the temple. The last day was celebrated with the dance of the nobility and the military, among whom danced also a female prisoner, who represented that goddess, and was sacrificed after the dance along with the other prisoners. Thus the festival, as well as the month, had the name of *Hueitecuilbuitl*, that is, the great festival of the lords.

In the ninth month, which began on the 5th of August, the second festival of *Huitzilopochtli* was kept; on which, besides the usual ceremonies, they adorned all the idols with flowers; not only those which were wor-

shipped in the temples, but likewise those which they had for private devotion in their houses; from whence the month was called *Flaxochimaco*. The night preceding the festival was employed in preparing the meats which they eat next day with the greatest jubilee. The nobles of both sexes danced together, the arms of the one resting on the shoulders of the other. This dance, which lasted until the evening, finished with the sacrifice of some prisoners. In this month also the festival of *Jacateuētlī*, the god of commerce was held, accompanied with sacrifices.

In the tenth month, the beginning of which was on the 25th of August, they kept the festival of *Xiuh-teuētlī*, god of fire. In the preceding months, the priests brought out of the woods a large tree, which they fixed in the under area of the temple. The day before the festival they stripped off its branches and bark, and adorned it with painted paper, and from that time it was revered as the image of *Xiuh-teuētlī*. The owners of the prisoners which were to be sacrificed on this occasion, dyed their bodies with red ochre, to resemble in some measure the colour of fire, and were dressed in their best garments. They went to the temple, accompanied by their prisoners, and passed the whole night in singing and dancing with them. The day of the festival being arrived, and also the hour of the sacrifice, they tied the hands and feet of the victims, and sprinkled the powder of *Jaubtli* (*f*) in their faces, in order

(*f*) The *Jaubtli* is a plant whose stem is about a cubit long, its leaves are similar to those of the willow, but indented, its flowers are yellow and the roots thin. The flowers, as well as the other parts of the plant, have the same smell and taste as those of the anise. It is very useful in medicine, and the Mexican physicians applied it in different distempers; it was also made use of for many superstitious ends.

order to deaden their senses, that their torments might be less painful. Then they began the dance, each with his victim upon his back, and one after the other threw them into a large fire kindled in the area, from which they soon after drew them with hooks of wood, to complete the sacrifice upon the altar in the ordinary way. The Mexicans gave to this month the name of *Xocobuetzi*, which signifies the maturity of the fruits. The Tlascalans called the ninth month *Miccailheuitl*, or the festival of the dead; because in it they made oblations for the souls of the deceased; and the tenth month *Hueimiccailheuitl*, or the grand festival of the dead; because in that they wore mourning, and made lamentation for the death of their ancestors.

Five days before the commencement of the eleventh month, which began on the 14th of September, all festivals ceased. During the first eight days of the month, was a dance, but without music or singing; every one directing his movements according to his own pleasure. After this period was elapsed, they clothed a female prisoner in the habit of Teteoinan, or the mother of the gods, whose festival was celebrating; the prisoner was attended by many women, and particularly by the midwives, who for four whole days employed themselves to amuse and comfort her. When the principal day of the festival was arrived, they led this woman to the upper area of the temple of that goddess, where they sacrificed her; but this was not performed in the usual mode, nor upon the common altar where other victims were sacrificed, for they beheaded her upon the shoulders of another woman, and stripped her skin off, which a youth, with a numerous attendance, carried to present to the idol of Huitzilopochtli, in memory



mory of the inhuman sacrifice which their ancestors had made of the princess of Colhuacan; but before it was presented, they sacrificed in the usual mode four prisoners, in memory, as is probable, of the four Xochimilcan prisoners which they had sacrificed during their captivity in Colhuacan. In this month they made a review of their troops, and enlisted those youths who were destined to the profession of arms, and who, in future were to serve in war when there should be occasion. All the nobles and the populace swept the temples, on which account this month took the name of *Ochpaniztli*, which signifies, *a sweeping*. They cleaned and mended the streets, and repaired the aqueducts and their houses, all which labours were attended with many superstitious rites.

In the twelfth month, which began upon the 4th of October, they celebrated the festival of the arrival of the gods, which they expressed by the word *Teotleco*, which name also they gave to both the month and the festival. On the 16th day of this month, they covered all the temples, and the corner stones of the streets of the city with green branches. On the 18th, the gods, according to their accounts, began to arrive, the first of whom was the great god Tezcatlipoca. They spread before the door of the sanctuary of this god a mat made of the palm-tree, and sprinkled upon it some powder of maize. The high-priest stood in watch all the preceding night, and went frequently to look at the mat, and as soon as he discovered any footsteps upon the powder, which had been trod upon, no doubt, by some other deceitful priest, he began to cry out, "*Our great god is now arrived.*" All the other priests, with a great croud of people, repaired there to adore him, and celebrate

lebrate his arrival with hymns and dances, which were repeated all the rest of the night. On the two days following, other gods successively arrived, and on the twentieth and last day, when they believed that all their gods were come, a number of youths dressed in the form of various monsters, danced around a large fire, into which, from time to time, they threw prisoners, who were there consumed as burnt sacrifices. At sunset they made great entertainments, at which they drank more than usual, imagining, that the wine with which they filled their bellies, would serve to wash the feet of their gods. To such excesses did the barbarous superstition of those people lead! Nor was the ceremony which they practised, in order to preserve their children from the evil which they dreaded from one of their gods, less extravagant: this was the custom of sticking a number of feathers on their shoulders, their arms, and legs, by means of turpentine.

In the thirteenth month, which began on the 24th of October, the festival of the gods of water and the mountains, was celebrated. The name *Tepcilhuitl*, which was given to this month, signified only the festival of the mountains. They made little mountains of paper, on which they placed some little serpents made of wood, or of roots of trees, and certain small idols called *Ehecatontin*, covered with a particular paste. They put both upon the altars and worshipped them, as the images of the gods of the mountains, sung hymns to them, and presented copal and meats to them. The prisoners who were sacrificed at this festival were five in number, one man and four women; to each of which a particular name was given, alluding, probably, to some mystery of which we are ignorant. They clothed them  
in

in painted paper, which was besmeared with elastic gum, and carried them in procession in litters, after which they sacrificed them in the usual manner.

In the fourteenth month, which commenced on the 13th of November, was the festival of Mixcoatl, goddess of the chace. It was preceded by four days of rigid and general fasting, accompanied with the effusion of blood, during which time they made arrows and darts for the supply of their arsenals, and also certain small arrows which they placed together with pieces of pine, and some meats, upon the tombs of their relations, and after one day burned them. When the fast was over, the inhabitants of Mexico and Tlatelolco went out to a general chace in one of the neighbouring mountains, and all the animals which they caught were brought, with great rejoicings to Mexico, where they were sacrificed to Mixcoatl; the king himself was present not only at the sacrifice, but likewise at the chace. They gave to this month the name of *Quecholli*, because at this season the beautiful bird which went amongst them by that name, and by many called *flamingo*, made its appearance on the banks of the Mexican lake.

In the fifteenth month, the beginning of which was on the 3d day of December, the third and principal festival of Huitzilopochtli and his brother, was celebrated. On the first day of the month, the priests formed two statues of those two gods, of different seeds pasted together, with the blood of children that had been sacrificed, in which in the place of bones they substituted pieces of the wood of acacia. They placed these statues upon the principal altar of the temple, and during the whole of that night the priests kept watch. The day



day following, they gave their benediction to the statues, and also to a small quantity of water which was preserved in the temple for the purpose of being sprinkled on the face of any new king of Mexico, and of the general of their armies after their election; but the general, besides being besprinkled, was required to drink it. As soon as the statues were consecrated by this benediction, the dance of both sexes began, and continued all the month for three or four hours every day. During the whole of the month a great deal of blood was shed; and four days before the festival, the masters of the prisoners which were to be sacrificed, and which were selected for the occasion, observed a fast, and had their bodies painted of various colours. In the morning of the twentieth day, on which the festival was held, a grand and solemn procession was made. A priest bearing a serpent of wood, which he raised high up in his hands, called *Ezpamitl*, and which was the badge of the gods of war, went first, with another priest bearing a standard, such as they used in their armies. After them came a third priest, who carried the statue of the god Painalton, the vicar of Huitzilopochtli. Then came the victims after the other priests, and lastly, the people. The procession set out from the greater temple, towards the district of *Tectlachco*, where it stopped, while two prisoners of war, and some purchased slaves were sacrificed; they proceeded next to Tlatelolco, Popotla, and Chapoltepec, from whence they returned to the city, and after having passed through other districts, re-entered the temple.

This circuit of nine or ten miles, which they performed, consumed the greatest part of the day, and at all the places where they stopped, they sacrificed quails, and,

and, probably, some prisoners also. When they arrived at the temple, they placed the statue of Painalton, and the standard, upon the altar of Huitzilopochtli; the king offered incense to the two statues of seeds, and then ordered another procession to be made round the temple, at the conclusion of which they sacrificed the rest of the prisoners and slaves. These sacrifices were made at the close of day. That night the priests kept watch, and the next morning they carried the statue in paste of Huitzilopochtli to a great hall, which was within the precincts of the temple, and there in the presence only of the king, four principal priests, and four superiors of the seminaries, the priest Quetzalcoatl, who was the chief of the Tlamacazqui, or penance-doers, threw a dart at the statue, which pierced it through and through. They then said, that their god was dead. One of the principal priests cut out the heart of the statue, and gave it to the king to eat. The body was divided into two parts; one of which was given to the people of Tlatelolco, and the other to the Mexicans. The share was again divided into four parts, for the four quarters of the city, and each of these four parts into as many minute particles as there were men in each quarter. This ceremony they expressed by the word *Teocualo*, which signifies, the god to be eaten. The women never tasted this sacred paste, probably, because they had no concern with the profession of arms. We are ignorant, whether or not they made the same use of the statue of Tlacahuepan. The Mexicans gave to this month the name of *Panquetzaliztli*, which signifies, the raising of the standard, alluding to the one which they carried in the above procession. In this month they employed

employed themselves in renewing the boundaries, and repairing the inclosures of their fields.

In the sixteenth month, which began upon the 23d of December, the fifth and last festival of the gods of water, and the mountains, took place. They prepared for it with the usual austerities, by making oblations of copal and other aromatic gums. They formed little figures of the mountains, which they consecrated to those gods, and certain little idols made of the paste of various eatable feeds, of which when they had worshipped them, they opened the breasts, and cut out the hearts, with a weaver's shuttle, and afterwards cut off their heads, in imitation of the rites of the sacrifices. The body was divided by the heads of families amongst their domestics, in order that by eating them they might be preserved from certain distempers, to which those persons who were negligent of worship to those deities conceived themselves to be subject. They burned the habits in which they had dressed the small idols, and preserved the ashes with the utmost care in their oratories, and also the vessels in which the images had been formed. Besides these rites, which were usually observed in private houses, they made some sacrifices of human victims in the temple. For four days preceding the festival, a strict fast was observed, accompanied with the effusion of blood. This month was called *Atemoztli*, which signifies the descent of the water, for a reason which we will immediately mention (g).

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(g) Martino di Leone, a Dominican, makes *Atemoztli* signify, the altar of the gods; but the name of the altar is *Teomomoztli*, not *Atemoztli*. Boturini pretends that the name is a contraction of *Ateomomoztli*, but such contractions obtained not among the Mexicans; besides the figure of this month which represents water falling obliquely upon the steps of an edifice, expresses exactly the descent of water signified by the word *Atemoztli*.



In the seventeenth month, which began upon the 12th of January, they celebrated the festival of the goddesses *Ilamateuctli*. A female prisoner was selected to represent her, and was clothed in the habit of her idol. They made her dance alone to a tune which some old priests sung to her, and she was permitted to express her affliction at her approaching death, which, however, was esteemed a bad omen from other victims. At sun-set, on the day of the festival, the priests adorned with the ensigns of various gods, sacrificed her in the usual manner, and afterwards cut off her head, when one of the priests, taking it in his hand, began a dance, in which he was joined by the rest. The priests, during this festival, made a race down the stairs of the temple; and the following day the populace entertained themselves with a game similar to the *Lupercalia* of the Romans; for running through the streets, they beat all the women they met with little bags of hay. In this same month they kept the festival of *Mictehteuçtli*, god of hell, on which they made a nocturnal sacrifice of a prisoner, and also the second festival of *Jacateuctli*, god of the merchants. The name *Tititl*, which they gave to this month, signifies the constringent power of the season which the cold occasions (*b*).

In the eighteenth and last month, which began on the first of February, the second festival of the god of fire was held. On the tenth day of this month, the whole of the Mexican youth went out to the chase, not only of wild beasts in the woods, but also to catch the birds of the lake. On the sixteenth, the fire of the temple and private houses was extinguished, and they

(*b*) The above author says, that *Tititl* signifies our belly; but all those who understand the Mexican language know that such a name would be a solecism.

they kindled it anew before the idol of that god, which they adorned on the occasion, with gems and beautiful feathers. The hunters presented all their spoils to the priests, one part of which was consumed in burnt-offerings to their gods, and the other was sacrificed, and afterwards dressed for the tables of the nobility and priests. The women made oblations of *Tamalli*, which they afterwards distributed among the hunters. One of the ceremonies observed upon this occasion was that of boring the ears of all the children of each sex, and putting ear-rings in them. But the greatest singularity attending this festival was that not a single human victim was sacrificed at it.

They celebrated likewise in this month the second festival of the mother of the gods, respecting which, however, we know nothing except the ridiculous custom of lifting up the children by the ears into the air, from a belief that they would thereby become higher in stature. With regard to the name *Izcalli*, which they gave to this month, we are unable to give any explanation (i).

After the eighteen months of the Mexican year were completed on the 20th of February, upon the 21st the five days called *Nemontemi* commenced, during which days no festival was celebrated, nor any enterprise undertaken, because they were reckoned *dies infausti*, or unlucky days. The child that happened to be born on any of these days, if it was a boy, got the name of *Nemoquichtli*, useless man; if she was a girl, received the name of *Nencibuatl*, useless woman.

Among the festivals annually celebrated, the most solemn were those of *Teoxihuitl*, or divine years, of which  
kind

(i) *Izcalli* signifies, Behold the house. The interpretations given by Torquemada and Leone are too violent.

kind were all those years which had the rabbit for their denominative character. The sacrifices were on such occasions more numerous, the oblations more abundant, and the dances more solemn, especially in Tlascala, in Huexotzinco, and Cholula. In like manner, the festivals at the beginning of every period of thirteen years were attended with more pomp and gravity; that is, in the years 1 *Tochtli*, 1 *Acatl*, 1 *Tecpatl*, and 1 *Calli*.

But the festival which was celebrated every fifty-two years, was by far the most splendid and most solemn, not only among the Mexicans, but likewise among all the nations of that empire, or who were neighbouring to it. On the last night of their century, they extinguished the fire of all the temples and houses, and broke their vessels, earthen pots, and all other kitchen utensils, preparing themselves in this manner for the end of the world, which at the termination of each century they expected with terror. The priests, clothed in various dresses and ensigns of their gods, and accompanied by a vast croud of people, issued from the temple out of the city, directing their way towards the mountain *Huixachtla*, near to the city of Iztapalapan, upwards of six miles distant from the capital. They regulated their journey in some measure by observation of the stars, in order that they might arrive at the mountain a little before midnight, on the top of which the new fire was to be kindled. In the mean while, the people remained in the utmost suspense and solicitude, hoping on the one hand to find from the new fire a new century granted to mankind, and fearing on the other hand, the total destruction of mankind, if the fire, by divine interference, should not be permitted to kindle. Husbands covered the faces of their pregnant wives with the leaves of the aloe, and



and shut them up in granaries ; because they were afraid that they would be converted into wild beasts and would devour them. They also covered the faces of children in that way, and did not allow them to sleep, to prevent their being transformed into mice. All those who did not go out with the priests, mounted upon terraces, to observe from thence the event of the ceremony. The office of kindling the fire on this occasion belonged exclusively to a priest of *Copolco*, one of the districts of the city. The instruments for this purpose were, as we have already mentioned, two pieces of wood, and the place on which the fire was produced from them, was the breast of some brave prisoner whom they sacrificed. As soon as the fire was kindled, they all at once exclaimed with joy ; and a great fire was made on the mountain that it might be seen from afar, in which they afterwards burned the victim whom they had sacrificed. Immediately they took up portions of the sacred fire, and strove with each other who should carry it most speedily to their houses. The priests carried it to the greater temple of Mexico, from whence all the inhabitants of that capital were supplied with it. During the thirteen days which followed the renewal of the fire, which were the intercalary days, interposed between the past and ensuing century to adjust the year with the course of the sun, they employed themselves in repairing and whitening the public and private buildings, and in furnishing themselves with new dresses and domestic utensils, in order that every thing might be new, or at least appear to be so, upon the commencement of the new century. On the first day of that year, and of that century, which as we have already mentioned, corresponded to the 26th of February, for no person was it lawful to taste water before mid-day. At that hour the sacrifices began, the number of which was  
succeeded

suit to the grandeur of the festival. Every place resounded with the voice of gladness and mutual congratulations on account of the new century which heaven had granted to them. The illuminations made during the first nights were extremely magnificent ; their ornaments of dress, their entertainments, dances, and public games, were superiorly solemn. Amongst the last, amidst an immense concourse of people, and the most lively demonstrations of joy, the game of the flyers, which we shall describe in another place, was exhibited ; in which the number of flyers were four, and the number of turns which each made in his flight, thirteen, which signified the four periods of thirteen years, of which the century was composed.

What we have hitherto related concerning the festivals of the Mexicans, clearly evinces their superstitious character ; but it will appear still more evident from the account we are now to give of the rites which they observed upon the birth of children, at their marriages, and at funerals.

As soon as a child was born, the midwife, after cutting the navel-string, and burying the secundine, bathed it, saying these words ; *Receive the water ; for the goddess Chalchiuhcueje is thy mother. May this bath cleanse the spots which thou bearest from the womb of thy mother, purify thy heart and give thee a good and perfect life.* Then addressing her prayer to that goddess, she demanded in similar words the same favour from her ; and taking up the water again with her right hand, she blew upon it, and wet the mouth, head, and breast of the child with it, and after bathing the whole of its body, she said : *May the invisible God descend upon this water, and cleanse thee of every sin and impurity, and free thee from evil fortune :* and then turning to the child, she spoke to it thus :

*Lovely*

*Lovely child, the gods Ometeuētlī and Omecihuatl have created thee in the highest place of heaven, in order to send thee into the world ; but know that the life on which thou art entering is sad, painful, and full of uneasiness and miseries : nor wilt thou be able to eat thy bread without labour : May God assist thee in the many adversities which await thee.* This ceremony was concluded with congratulations to the parents and relations of the child. If it was the son of the king, or of any great lord, the chief of his subjects came to congratulate the father, and to wish the highest prosperity to his child (*k*).

When the first bathing was done, the diviners were consulted concerning the fortune of the child, for which purpose they were informed of the day and hour of its birth. They considered the nature of the sign of that day, and the ruling sign of that period of thirteen days to which it belonged, and if it was born at midnight, two signs concurred, that is, the sign of the day which was just concluding, and that of the day which was just beginning. After having made their observations, they pronounced the good or bad fortune of the child. If it was bad, and if the fifth day after its birth-day, on which the second bathing was usually performed, was one of the *dies infausti*, the ceremony was postponed until a more favourable

(*k*) In Guatemala, and other surrounding provinces, the births of male children were celebrated with much solemnity and superstition. As soon as the son was born a turkey was sacrificed. The bathing was performed in some fountain, or river, where they made oblations of copal, and sacrifices of parrots. The navel string was cut upon an ear of maize, and with a new knife, which was immediately after cast into the river. They sowed the seeds of that ear, and attended to its growth with the utmost care, as if it had been a sacred thing. What was reaped from this seed was divided into three parts ; one of which was given to the diviner ; of another part they made pap for the child, and the rest was preserved until the same child should be old enough to be able to sow it.



favourable occasion. To the second bathing, which was a more solemn rite, all the relations and friends, and some young boys were invited; and if the parents were in good circumstances, they gave great entertainments, and made presents of apparel to all the guests. If the father of the child was a military person, he prepared for this ceremony a little bow, four arrows, and a little habit, resembling in make that which the child, when grown up, would wear. If he was a countryman, or an artist, he prepared some instruments belonging to his art, proportioned in size to the infancy of the child. If the child was a girl, they furnished a little habit, suitable to her sex, a small spindle, and some other little instruments for weaving. They lighted a great number of torches, and the midwife taking up the child, carried it through all the yard of the house, and placed it upon a heap of the leaves of sword grass close by a basin of water, which was prepared in the middle of the yard, and then undressing it, said: *My child, the gods Ometeuctli and Omecihuatl, lords of heaven, have sent thee to this dismal and calamitous world. Receive this water which is to give thee life.* And after wetting its mouth, head, and breast, with forms similar to those of the first bathing, she bathed its whole body, and rubbing every one of its limbs, said, *Where art thou ill Fortune? In what limb art thou hid? Go far from this child.* Having spoke this, she raised up the child to offer it to the gods, praying them to adorn it with every virtue. The first prayer was offered to the two gods before named, the second to the goddesses of water, the third to all the gods together, and the fourth to the sun and the earth. *You sun, she said, father of all things that live upon the earth, our mother, receive this child, and protect him as your own son; and since he is born*

*born for war* (if his father belonged to the army), *may he die in it, defending the honour of the gods ; so may he enjoy in heaven the delights which are prepared for all those who sacrifice their lives in so good a cause.* She then put in his little hands the instruments of that art which he was to exercise, with a prayer addressed to the protecting god of the same. The instruments of the military art were buried in some fields, where, in future, it was imagined the boy would fight in battle, and the female instruments were buried in the house itself, under the stone for grinding maize. On this same occasion, if we are to credit Boturini, they observed the ceremony of passing the boy four times through the fire.

Before they put the instruments of any art into the hands of the child, the midwife requested the young boys who had been invited, to give him a name, which was generally such a name as had been suggested to them by the father. The midwife then clothed him, and laid him in the *cozolli*, or cradle, praying Joalticitl, the goddess of cradles, to warm him and guard him in her bosom, and Joalteuctli, god of the night, to make him sleep.

The name which was given to boys, was generally taken from the sign of the day on which they were born (a rule particularly practised among the Mixtecas), as *Nabuixochitl*, or IV Flower, *Macuilcoatl*, or V Serpent, and *Omecalli*, or II House. At other times the name was taken from circumstances attending the birth ; as for instance, one of the four chiefs who governed the republic of Tlascala, at the time of the arrival of the Spaniards, received the name of *Citlalpopoca*, smoking star ; because he was born at the time of a comet's appear-

ance in the heavens. The child born on the day of the renewal of the fire, had the name of *Molpilli*, if it was a male; if a female she was called *Xiuhnenetl*, alluding in both names to circumstances attending the festival. Men had in general the names of animals; women those of flowers; in giving which it is probable, they paid regard both to the dream of the parents, and the counsel of diviners. For the most part they gave but one name to boys; afterwards it was usual for them to acquire a surname from their actions, as Montezuma I. on account of his bravery was given the surnames of *Ilhuacamina* and *Tlacacli*.

When the religious ceremony of bathing was over, an entertainment was given, the quality and honours of which corresponded with the rank of the giver. At such seasons of rejoicing, a little excess in drinking was permitted, as the disorderliness of drunken persons extended not beyond private houses. The torches were kept burning till they were totally consumed, and particular care was taken to keep up the fire all the four days, which intervened between the first and second ceremony of bathing, as they were persuaded that an omission of such a nature would ruin the fortune of the child. These rejoicings were repeated when they weaned the child, which they commonly did at three years of age (*l*).

With respect to the marriages of the Mexicans, although in them, as well as in all their customs, superstition had a great share, nothing, however, attended them which was repugnant to decency or honour. Any marriage

(*l*) In Guatemala it was usual to make rejoicings as soon as the child began to walk, and for seven years they continued to celebrate the anniversary of its birth.



marriage between persons related in the first degree of consanguinity or alliance, was strictly forbid, not only by the laws of Mexico, but also by the laws of Michuacan, unless it was between cousins (*m*). The parents were the persons who settled all marriages, and none were ever executed without their consent. When a son arrived at an age capable of bearing the charges of that state, which in men was from the age of twenty to twenty-two years, and in women from sixteen to eighteen, a suitable and proper wife was singled out for him; but before the union was concluded on, the diviners were consulted, who, after having considered the birth-day of the youth, and of the young girl intended for his bride, decided on the happiness or unhappiness of the match. If from the combination of signs attending their births, they pronounced the alliance unpropitious, that young maid was abandoned, and another sought. If, on the contrary, they predicted happiness to the couple, the young girl was demanded of her parents by certain women amongst them called *Cibuatlanque*, or solicitors, who were the most elderly and respectable amongst the kindred of the youth. These  
women

(*m*) In the ivth book, tit. 2. of the third provincial council of Mexico, it is supposed that the Gentiles of that new world married with their sisters; but it ought to be understood, that the zeal of those fathers was not confined in its exertions to the nations of the Mexican empire, amongst whom such marriages were not suffered, but extended to the barbarous Chechemecas, the Panuchese, and to other nations, which were extremely uncivilized in their customs. There is not a doubt, that the council alluded to those barbarians, who were then (in 1585), in the progress of their conversion to Christianity, and not to the Mexicans and the nations under subjection to them, who many years before the council were already converted. Besides, in the interval of four years, between the conquest of the Spaniards and the promulgation of the gospel, many abusive practices had been introduced among those nations never before tolerated under their kings, as the religious missionaries employed in their conversion attest.

women went the first time at midnight to the house of the damsel, carried a present to her parents, and demanded her of them in a humble and respectful style. The first demand, was, according to the custom of that nation, infallibly refused, however advantageous and eligible the marriage might appear to the parents, who gave some plausible reasons for their refusal. After a few days were past, those women returned to repeat their demand, using prayers and arguments also, in order to obtain their request, giving an account of the rank and fortune of the youth, and of what he would make the dowry of his wife, and also gaining information of that which she could bring to the match on her part. The parents replied to this second request, that it was necessary to consult their relations and connections, and to find out the inclinations of their daughter, before they could come to any resolution. These female solicitors returned no more; as the parents themselves conveyed, by means of other women of their kindred, a decisive answer to the party.

A favourable answer being at last obtained, and a day appointed for the nuptials, the parents, after exhorting their daughter to fidelity and obedience to her husband, and to such a conduct in life as would do honour to her family, conducted her with a numerous company and music, to the house of her father-in-law; if noble, she was carried in a litter. The bridegroom, and the father and mother-in-law, received her at the gate of the house, with four torches borne by four women. At meeting, the bride and bridegroom reciprocally offered incense to each other; then the bridegroom taking the bride by the hand, led her into the hall, or chamber which was prepared for the nuptials. They

They both sat down upon a new and curiously wrought mat, which was spread in the middle of the chamber, and close to the fire which was kept lighted. Then a priest tied a point of the *huepilli*, or gown of the bride, with the *tilmatli*, or mantle of the bridegroom, and in this ceremony the matrimonial contract chiefly consisted. The wife now made some turns round the fire, and then returning to her mat, she, along with her husband, offered copal to their gods, and exchanged presents with each other. The repast followed next. The married pair eat upon the mat, giving mouthfuls to each other alternately and to the guests in their places. When those who had been invited were become exhilarated with wine, which was freely drank on such occasions, they went out to dance in the yard of the house, while the married pair remained in the chamber, from which, during four days, they never stirred, except to obey the calls of nature, or to go to the oratory at midnight to burn incense to the idols, and to make oblations of eatables. They passed these four days in prayer and fasting, dressed in new habits, and adorned with certain ensigns of the gods of their devotion, without proceeding to any act of less decency, fearing that otherwise the punishment of heaven would fall upon them. Their beds on these nights were two mats of rushes, covered with small sheets, with certain feathers, and a gem of *Chalchibuitl* in the middle of them. At the four corners of the bed green canes and spines of the aloe were laid, with which they were to draw blood from their tongues and their ears in honour of their gods. The priests were the persons who adjusted the bed to sanctify the marriage; but we know nothing of the mystery of the canes, the feathers, and the gem. Until the  
fourth



fourth night the marriage was not consummated ; they believed it would have proved unlucky, if they had anticipated the period of consummation. The morning after they bathed themselves and put on new dresses, and those who had been invited, adorned their heads with white, and their hands and feet with red feathers. The ceremony was concluded by making presents of dresses to the guests, which were proportioned to the circumstances of the married pair ; and on that same day they carried to the temple the mats, sheets, canes, and the eatables which had been presented to the idols.

The forms which we have described, in the marriages of the Mexicans were not so universal through the empire, but that some provinces observed other peculiarities. In Ichcatlan, whoever was desirous of marrying presented himself to the priests, by whom he was conducted to the temple, where they cut off a part of his hair before the idol which was worshipped there, and then pointing him out to the people, they began to exclaim, saying, *this man wishes to take a wife*. Then they made him descend, and take the first free woman he met, as the one whom heaven destined to him. Any woman who did not like to have him for a husband, avoided coming near to the temple at that time, that she might not subject herself to the necessity of marrying him : this marriage was only singular therefore in the mode of seeking for a wife.

Among the Otomics, it was lawful to use any free woman before they married her. When any person was about to take a wife, if on the first night he found any thing about his wife which was disagreeable to him, he was permitted to divorce her the next day ; but if he shewed himself all that day content with having her, he

he could not afterwards abandon her. The contract being thus ratified, the pair retired to do penance for past offences twenty or thirty days, during which period they abstained from most of the pleasures of the senses, drew blood from themselves, and frequently bathed.

Among the Mixtecas, besides the ceremony of tying the married pair together by the end of their garments, they cut off a part of their hair, and the husband carried his wife for a little time upon his back.

They permitted polygamy in the Mexican empire. The kings and lords had numerous wives; but it is probable, that they observed all the ceremonies with their principal wives only, and that with the rest the essential rite of tying their garments together was sufficient.

The Spanish theologists and canonists, who went to Mexico immediately after the conquest, being unacquainted with the customs of those people, raised doubts about their marriages; but when they had learnt the language, and properly examined that and other points of importance, they acknowledged such marriages to be just and lawful. Pope Paul III. and the provincial council of Mexico, ordered, in conformity to the sacred canons, and the usage of the church, that all those who were willing to embrace Christianity, should keep no other wife but the one whom they had first married.

However superstitious the Mexicans were in other matters, in the rites which they observed at funerals they exceeded themselves. As soon as any person died, certain masters of funeral ceremonies were called, who were generally men advanced in years. They cut a  
number

number of pieces of paper, with which they dressed the dead body, and took a glass of water with which they sprinkled the head, saying, that that was the water used in the time of their life. They then dressed it in a habit suitable to the rank, the wealth, and the circumstances attending the death of the party. If the deceased had been a warrior, they clothed him in the habit of Huitzilopochtli; if a merchant, in that of Jacteuctli; if an artist, in that of the protecting god of his art or trade: one who had been drowned was dressed in the habit of Tlaloc; one who had been executed for adultery, in that of Tlazolteotl; and a drunkard in the habit of Tezcatzoncatl, god of wine. In short, as Gomara has well observed, they wore more garments after they were dead than while they were living.

With the habit they gave the dead a jug of water, which was to serve on the journey to the other world, and also at successive different times, different pieces of paper, mentioning the use of each. On consigning the first piece to the dead, they said: *By means of this you will pass without danger between the two mountains which fight against each other.* With the second they said: *By means of this you will walk without obstruction along the road which is defended by the great serpent.* With the third: *By this you will go securely through the place, where there is the crocodile Xochitonal.* The fourth was a safe passport through the eight deserts; the fifth through the eight hills; and the sixth was given in order to pass without hurt through the sharp wind; for they pretended that it was necessary to pass a place called *Itzebecajan*, where a wind blew so violently as to tear up rocks, and so sharp that it cut like a knife; on which



which account they burned all the habits which the deceased had worn during life, their arms, and some household goods, in order that the heat of this fire might defend them from the cold of that terrible wind.

One of the chief and most ridiculous ceremonies at funerals was the killing a *techichi*, a domestic quadruped, which we have already mentioned, resembling a little dog, to accompany the deceased in their journey to the other world. They fixed a string about its neck, believing that necessary to enable it to pass the deep river of *Chiuhnahuapan*, or New Waters. They buried the techichi, or burned it along with the body of its master, according to the kind of death of which he died. While the masters of the ceremonies were lighting up the fire in which the body was to be burned, the other priests kept singing in a melancholy strain. After burning the body, they gathered the ashes in an earthen pot, amongst which, according to the circumstances of the deceased, they put a gem of more or less value; which they said would serve him in place of a heart in the other world. They buried this earthen pot in a deep ditch, and fourscore days after made oblations of bread and wine over it.

Such were the funeral rites of the common people; but at the death of kings, and that of lords, or persons of high rank, some peculiar forms were observed that are worthy to be mentioned. When the king fell sick, says Gomara, they put a mask on the idol of Huitzilopochtli, and also one on the idol of Tezcatlipoca, which they never took off until the king was either dead or recovered; but it is certain, that the idol of Huitzilopochtli had always two masks, not one. As soon as a king of Mexico happened to die, his death

was published in great form, and all the lords who resided at court, and also those who were but a little distant from it were informed of the event, in order that they might be present at the funeral. In the mean time they laid the royal corpse upon beautiful curiously wrought mats, which was attended and watched by his domestics. Upon the fourth or fifth day after, when the lords were arrived, who brought with them rich dresses, beautiful feathers, and slaves to be presented, to add to the pomp of the funeral, they clothed the corpse in fifteen, or more, very fine habits of cotton of various colours, ornamented it with gold, silver, and gems, hung an emerald at the under lip, which was to serve in place of a heart, covered the face with a mask, and over the habits were placed the ensigns of that god, in whose temple or area the ashes were to be buried. They cut off some of the hair, which, together with some more which had been cut off in the infancy of the king, they preserved in a little box, in order to perpetuate, as they said, the memory of the deceased. Upon the box they laid an image of the deceased, made of wood, or of stone. Then they killed the slave who was his chaplain, who had had the care of his oratory, and all that belonged to the private worship of his gods, in order that he might serve him in the same office in the other world.

The funeral procession came next, accompanied by all the relations of the deceased, the whole of the nobility, and the wives of the late king, who testified their sorrow by tears and other demonstrations of grief. The nobles carried a great standard of paper, and the royal arms and ensigns. The priests continued singing, but without any musical instrument. Upon their arrival at  
the

the lower area of the temple, the high-priest, together with their servants, came out to meet the royal corpse, which, without delay, they placed upon the funeral pile, which was prepared there for that purpose of odoriferous resinous woods, together with a large quantity of copal, and other aromatic substances. While the royal corpse, and all its habits, the arms and ensigns were burning, they sacrificed at the bottom of the stairs of the temple a great number of slaves of those which belonged to the deceased, and also of those which had been presented by the lords. Along with the slaves they likewise sacrificed some of the irregularly formed men, whom the king had collected in his palaces for his entertainment, in order that they might give him the same pleasure in the other world; and for the same reason they used also to sacrifice some of his wives (*n*). The number of the victims was proportioned to the grandeur of the funeral, and amounted sometimes, as several historians affirm, to two hundred. Among the other sacrifices the techichi was not omitted; they were firmly persuaded, that without such a guide it would be impossible to get through some dangerous ways which led to the other world.

The day following the ashes were gathered, and the teeth which remained entire; they sought carefully for the emerald which had been hung to the under lip, and the whole were put into the box with the hair, and they deposited

(*n*) Acosta says (lib. v. cap. 8.) that at the funerals of lords, all the members of his family were sacrificed. But this is grossly false and in itself incredible; for had this been the case, the nobles of Mexico would have soon been exterminated. There is no record in the History of Mexico, that at the death of the king of Mexico, any of his brothers were sacrificed, as this author would intimate. How is it possible they could practise such cruelty when the new king was usually elected from among the brothers of the deceased.



deposited the box in the place destined for his sepulchre. The four following days they made oblations of eatables over the sepulchre; on the fifth, they sacrificed some slaves, and also some others on the twentieth, fortieth, sixtieth, and eightieth day after. From that time forward, they sacrificed no more human victims; but every year they celebrated the day of the funeral with sacrifices of rabbits, butterflies, quails, and other birds, and with oblations of bread, wine, copal, flowers, and certain little reeds filled with aromatic substances, which they called *acajetl*. This anniversary was held for four years.

The bodies of the dead were in general burned; they buried the bodies entire of those only who had been drowned, or had died of dropsy, and some other diseases; but what was the reason of these exceptions we know not.

There was no fixed place for burials. Many ordered their ashes to be buried near to some temple or altar, some in the fields, and others in those sacred places of the mountains where sacrifices used to be made. The ashes of the kings and lords, were, for the most part deposited in the towers of the temples (*o*), especially in those of the greater temple. Close to Teotihuacan, where there were many temples, there were also innumerable sepulchres. The tombs of those whose bodies had been buried entire, agreeably to the testimony of the anonymous conqueror who saw them, were deep ditches, formed with stone and lime, within which they placed the bodies in a sitting posture upon *icpalli*, or low seats, together with the instruments of their art or profession.

If

(*o*) Solis, in his History of the Conquest of Mexico, affirms, that the ashes of the kings were deposited in Chapultepec; but this is false, and contradicts the report of the conqueror Cortes whose panegyric he wrote, of Bernal Dias, and other eye-witnesses of the contrary.

If it was the sepulchre of any military person, they laid a shield and sword by him ; if of a woman, a spindle, a weaver's shuttle, and a *xicalli*, which was a certain naturally formed vessel, of which we shall say more hereafter. In the tombs of the rich they put gold and jewels, but all were provided with eatables for the long journey which they had to make. The Spanish conquerors, knowing of the gold which was buried with the Mexican lords in their tombs, dug up several, and found considerable quantities of that precious metal. Cortes says in his letters, that at one entry which he made into the capital, when it was besieged by his army, his soldiers found fifteen hundred *Castellanos* (*p*), that is, two hundred and forty ounces of gold, in one sepulchre, which was in the tower of a temple. The anonymous conqueror says also, that he was present at the digging up of another sepulchre, from which they took about three thousand *Castellanos*.

The caves of the mountains were the sepulchres of the ancient Chechemecas ; but, as they grew more civilized, they adopted in this and other rites, the customs of the Acolhuan nation, which were nearly the same with those of the Mexicans.

The Miztecas retained in part the ancient usage of the Chechemecas, but in some things they were singular in their customs. When any of their lords fell sick, they offered prayers, vows, and sacrifices for the recovery of his health. If it was restored, they made great rejoicings. If he died, they continued to speak of him as if he was still alive, and conducted one of his slaves to the corpse, dressed him in the habits of his master, put a mask upon his face, and for one whole day, paid him all the honours

(*p*) The Spanish goldsmiths divide the pound weight of gold into two *Marchi*, or into sixteen ounces, or a hundred *Castellanos* ; consequently, an ounce contains  $6\frac{1}{4}$  *Castellanos*.

honours which they had used to render to the deceased. At midnight, four priests carried the corpse to be buried in a wood, or in some cavern, particularly in that one where they believed the gate of paradise was, and at their return they sacrificed the slave, and laid him, with all the ornaments of his transitory dignity in a ditch ; but without covering him with earth.

Every year they held a festival in honour of their last lord, on which they celebrated his birth, not his death, for of it they never spoke.

The Zapotecas, their neighbours embalmed the body of the principal lord of their nation. Even from the time of the first Chechemecan kings aromatic preparations were in use among those nations to preserve dead bodies from speedy corruption ; but we do not know that these were very frequent.

We have now communicated all that we know concerning the religion of the Mexicans. The weakness of their worship, the superstition of their rites, the cruelty of their sacrifices, and the rigour of their austerities, will the more forcibly manifest to their descendants, the advantages which are derived from a mild, chaste, and pure religion, and will dispose them to thank eternally the Providence which has enlightened them, while their ancestors were left to perish in darkness and error.



## B O O K VII.

*The political and military Government of the Mexicans, that is, the Kings, Lords, Electors, Ambassadors, Dignities, and Magistrates ; the Judges, Laws, and Punishments ; the Military Force ; Agriculture, Chace, Fishing, and Commerce ; the Games ; the Drefs, Food, and Household Furniture ; the Language, Poetry, Music, and Dancing ; Medicine, History, and Painting ; Sculpture, Mosaic Works, and Casting of Metals ; Architecture, and other Arts of that Nation.*

**I**N the public as well as private œconomy of the Mexicans, the traces which remain of their political discernment, of their zeal for justice, and love of the public good, would meet with little credit, were they not confirmed both by the evidence of their paintings, and the attestations of many faithful and impartial authors, who were eye-witnesses of a great part of that which they have written. Those who are weak enough to imagine they can know the ancient Mexicans in their descendants, or from the nations of Canada and Louisiana, will be apt to consider the account we are to give of their refinement, their laws, and their arts, as fables invented by the Spaniards. But that we may not violate the laws of history, nor the fidelity due to the public, we shall candidly set forth all that which we have found to be authentic, without any apprehension of censure.

The education of youth, which is the chief support of a state, and which best unfolds the character of every nation, was amongst the Mexicans of so judicious a nature

as to be of itself sufficient to retort the supercilious contempt of certain critics upon themselves, who believe the empire of reason to be circumscribed to the boundaries of Europe. In whatever we say on this subject we shall be guided by the paintings of those nations, and their best informed historians.

Nothing, says F. Acoſta, has ſurprised me more, or appeared more worthy of memory and praise, than the care and method which the Mexicans observed in the tuition of youth. It would be difficult, indeed, to find a nation that has bestowed more attention on a point so important to every state. It is true, they mixed superstition with their precepts; but the zeal they manifested for the education of their children, upbraids the negligence of our modern fathers of families; and many of the lessons which they taught to their youth might serve as instruction to ours. All the Mexican children, even those of the royal family, were suckled by their own parents. If the mother was prevented from doing this by sickness, she did not employ a nurse till she was well informed both of her condition in life, and the quality of her milk. They were accustomed from infancy to endure hunger, heat, and cold. When they attained five years of age, they were either consigned to the priests, in order that they might be brought up in the seminaries, which was the general practice with the children of nobles, and even with those of the kings themselves; or if they were to be educated at home, their parents began at that period to instruct them in the worship of their gods, and to teach them the forms by which they were to pray and implore their protection. They were led frequently to the temple, that they might become attached to religion. An abhorrence of vice, a modesty of behaviour, respect to superiors,

superiors, and love of fatigue, were strongly inculcated. They were even made to sleep upon a mat; and were given no more food than the necessities of life required, nor any other clothing than that which decency demanded. When they arrived at a certain age, they were instructed in the use of arms, and if their parents belonged to the army, they were led to the wars along with them, that they might learn the military art, and to banish fear from their minds, by habituating themselves to danger. If their parents were husbandmen, or artists, they taught their children their own profession. Girls were learned to spin and weave, and obliged to bathe frequently, that they might be always healthy and cleanly, and the universal maxim was to keep the young of both sexes constantly employed.

One of the precepts most warmly inculcated to youth was, truth in their words; and whenever a lie was detected, the lip of the delinquent was pricked with the thorns of the aloe. They tied the feet of girls who were too fond of walking abroad. The son, who was disobedient or quarrelsome, was beat with nettles, or received punishment in some other manner proportioned, according to their judgment, to the fault he had committed.

The system of education agreeably to which the Mexicans trained up their children, and the constant attention with which they watched their actions, may be traced in the seven paintings of the collection of Mendoza, included between the numbers forty-nine and fifty-seven. In these are expressed the quantity and quality of the food, which was allowed them, the employments in which they were occupied, and the punishments by which their vices were corrected. In the fiftieth painting is represented a boy of four years, who is employed by his parents in



some things that are easy to do, in order to inure him to fatigue ; another of five years, who accompanies his father to market, carrying a little bundle on his back ; a girl of the same age who begins to learn to spin ; and another boy of six years whose father employs him to pick up the ears of maize, which happen to lie on the ground in the market-place.

In the fifty-first painting are drawn a father who teaches his son of seven years of age to fish ; and a mother, who teaches her daughter of the same age to spin ; *some boys* of eight years, who are threatened with punishment if they do not do their duty ; a lad of nine years, whose father pricks several parts of his body, in order to correct his indocility of temper ; and a girl of the same age, whose mother only pricks her hands ; a lad and a girl of ten years, whose parents beat them with a rod, because they refuse to do that which they are ordered.

The fifty-second painting represents *a boy and a girl* two lads of eleven years, who, not being amended by other punishments, are made by their fathers to receive the smoke of Chilli, or great pepper up their nose ; a lad of twelve years, whose father, in order to punish him for his faults, keeps him a whole day tied upon a dunghil, and a wench of the same age whose mother makes her walk, during the night, all over the house and part of the streets ; a lad of thirteen years, whose father makes him guide a little vessel laden with rushes ; and a wench of the same age grinding maize by order of her mother ; a youth of fourteen years employed by his father in fishing, and a young woman set to weave by her mother.

In the fifty-third painting, are represented two youths of fifteen years, the one consigned by his father to a priest,

priest, to be instructed in the rites of religion ; the other to the *Achcaubtli*, or officer of the militia, to be instructed in the military art. The fifty-fourth, shews the youth of the seminaries employed by their superiors in sweeping the temple, and in carrying branches of trees and herbs to adorn the sanctuaries, wood for the stoves, rushes to make seats, and stones and lime to repair the temple. In this same painting, and in the fifty-fifth, the different punishments inflicted on youth, who have committed trespasses, by their superiors, are also represented. One of them pricks a youth with the spines of the aloe for having neglected his duty : two priests throw burning firebrands on the head of another youth, for having been caught in familiar discourse with a young woman. They prick the body of another with sharp pine stakes, and another for disobedience is punished by having his hair burned. Lastly, is exhibited a youth carrying the baggage of a priest, who goes along with the army to encourage the soldiers in war, and to perform certain superstitious ceremonies.

Their children were bred to stand so much in awe of their parents, that even when grown up and married, they hardly durst speak before them. In short, the instructions and advice which they received were of such a nature, that I cannot dispense with transcribing some of the exhortations employed by them, the knowledge of which was obtained from the Mexicans themselves by the first religious missionaries who were employed in their conversion, particularly Motolinia, Olmos, and Sahagun, who acquired a perfect knowledge of the Mexican language, and made the most diligent inquiry into their manners and customs.

“ My

“ My fon,” faid the Mexican father, “ who art come  
“ into the light from the womb of thy mother like the  
“ chicken from the egg, and like it art preparing to fly  
“ through the world, we know not how long heaven  
“ will grant to us the enjoyment of that precious gem  
“ which we poffefs in thee ; but, however fhort the pe-  
“ riod, endeavour to live exactly, praying God continu-  
“ ally to affift thee. He created thee ; thou art his pro-  
“ perty. He is thy Father, and loves thee ftill more  
“ than I do ; repose in him thy thoughts, and day and  
“ night direct thy fighs to him. Reverence and falute  
“ thy elders, and hold no one in contempt. To the  
“ poor and the diftreffed be not dumb, but rather ufe  
“ words of comfort. Honour all perfons, particularly  
“ thy parents, to whom thou oweft obedience, refpect,  
“ and fervice. Guard againft imitating the example of  
“ thofe wicked fons, who, like brutes that are deprived  
“ of reafon, neither reverence their parents, liften to  
“ their inftruction, nor fubmit to their correction ; be-  
“ caufe, whoever follows their fteps will have an un-  
“ happy end, will die in a desperate or fudden manner,  
“ or will be killed and devoured by wild beafts.

“ Mock not, my fon, the aged or the imperfect.  
“ Scorn not him whom you fee fall into fome folly or  
“ tranfgreffion, nor make him reproaches ; but refrain  
“ thyfelf, and beware left thou fall into the fame error  
“ which offends thee in another. Go not where thou  
“ art not called, nor interfere in that which does not  
“ concern thee. Endeavour to manifefte thy good breed-  
“ ing in all thy words and actions. In converfation do  
“ not lay thy hands upon another, nor fpeak too much,  
“ nor interrupt or difturb another’s difcourfe. If thou  
“ heareft any one talking foolifhly, and it is not thy bu-  
“ finefs



“ finess to correct him, keep silence ; but if it does concern thee, consider first what thou art to say, and do not speak arrogantly, that thy correction may be well received.

“ When any one discourses with thee, hear him attentively, and hold thyself in an easy attitude ; neither playing with thy feet, nor putting thy mantle to thy mouth, nor spitting too often, nor looking about you here and there, nor rising up frequently if thou art sitting ; for such actions are indications of levity and low-breeding.

“ When thou art at table do not eat voraciously, nor shew thy displeasure if any thing displeases thee. If any one comes unexpectedly to dinner with thee, share with him what thou hast ; and when any person is entertained by thee, do not fix thy looks upon him.

“ In walking, look where thou goest, that thou mayst not push against any one. If thou seest another coming thy way, go a little aside to give him room to pass. Never step before thy elders, unless it be necessary, or that they order thee to do so. When thou sittest at table with them, do not eat or drink before them, but attend to them in a becoming manner, that thou mayst merit their favour.

“ When they give thee any thing, accept it with tokens of gratitude : if the present is great, do not become vain or fond of it. If the gift is small do not despise it, nor be provoked, nor occasion displeasure to them who favour thee. If thou becomest rich, do not grow insolent, nor scorn the poor ; for those very gods who deny riches to others in order to give them to thee, offended by thy pride, will take from thee again to give to others, Support thyself by thy own labours ;

“ labours ; for then thy food will be sweeter. I, my  
“ son, have supported thee hitherto with my sweat, and  
“ have omitted no duty of a father ; I have provided  
“ thee with every thing necessary, without taking it  
“ from others. Do thou so likewise.

“ Never tell a falsehood ; because a lie is a heinous  
“ sin. When it is necessary to communicate to another  
“ what has been imparted to thee, tell the simple truth  
“ without any addition. Speak ill of nobody. Do not  
“ take notice of the failings which thou observeest in  
“ others, if thou art not called upon to correct them.  
“ Be not a news-carrier, nor a sower of discord. When  
“ thou bearest any embassy, and he to whom it is borne  
“ is enraged, and speaks contemptuously of those who  
“ sent thee, do not report such an answer, but endea-  
“ vour to soften him, and dissemble as much as possible  
“ that which thou heardst, that thou mayest not raise  
“ discord and spread calumny of which thou mayest af-  
“ terwards repent.

“ Stay no longer than is necessary in the market-  
“ place ; for in such places there is the greatest danger  
“ of contracting vices.

“ When thou art offered an employment, imagine  
“ that the proposal is made to try thee ; then accept it  
“ not hastily, although thou knowest thyself more fit  
“ than others to exercise it ; but excuse thyself until  
“ thou art obliged to accept it ; thus thou wilt be more  
“ esteemed.

“ Be not dissolute ; because thou wilt thereby incense  
“ the gods, and they will cover thee with infamy. Re-  
“ strain thyself, my son, as thou art yet young, and wait  
“ until the girl, whom the gods destine for thy wife, ar-  
“ rive at a suitable age : leave that to their care, as they  
“ know

“ know how to order every thing properly. When the  
“ time for thy marriage is come, dare not to make it  
“ without the consent of thy parents, otherwise it will  
“ have an unhappy issue.

“ Steal not, nor give thyself up to gaming ; other-  
“ wise thou wilt be a disgrace to thy parents, whom  
“ thou oughtest rather to honour for the education they  
“ have given thee. If thou wilt be virtuous, thy exam-  
“ ple will put the wicked to shame. No more my son ;  
“ enough has been said in discharge of the duties of a  
“ father. With these counsels I wish to fortify thy  
“ mind. Refuse them not, nor act in contradiction to  
“ them ; for on them thy life, and all thy happiness, de-  
“ pend.”

Such were the instructions which the Mexicans frequently inculcated to their sons. Husbandmen and merchants gave their sons other advice regarding their particular profession, which we, however, omit, not to prove tedious to our readers ; but I cannot dispense with transcribing one of the exhortations made use of by mothers to their daughters, as it illustrates their mode of education and manners.

“ My daughter,” said the mother, “ born of my sub-  
“ stance, brought forth with my pains, and nourished  
“ with my milk, I have endeavoured to bring thee up  
“ with the greatest possible care, and thy father has  
“ wrought and polished thee like an emerald, that thou  
“ mayest appear in the eyes of men a jewel of virtue.  
“ Strive always to be good ; for otherwise who will have  
“ thee for a wife ? thou wilt be rejected by every one.  
“ Life is a thorny laborious path, and it is necessary  
“ to exert all our powers to obtain the goods which the  
“ gods are willing to yield to us ; we must not there-  
fore



“ fore be lazy or negligent, but diligent in every thing.  
“ Be orderly and take pains to manage the œconomy  
“ of thy house. Give water to thy husband for his  
“ hands, and make bread for thy family. Wherever  
“ thou goest, go with modesty and composure, without  
“ hurrying thy steps, or laughing with those whom thou  
“ meetest, neither fixing thy looks upon them, nor cast-  
“ ing thy eyes thoughtlessly, first to one side, and then  
“ to another, that thy reputation may not be sullied ;  
“ but give a courteous answer to those who salute and  
“ put any question to thee.

“ Employ thyself diligently in spinning and weaving,  
“ in sewing and embroidering ; for by these arts thou  
“ wilt gain esteem, and all the necessaries of food and  
“ clothing. Do not give thyself too much to sleep, nor  
“ seek the shade, but go in the open air and there re-  
“ pose thyself ; for effeminacy brings along with it idle-  
“ nefs and other vices.

“ In whatever thou doest, encourage not evil  
“ thoughts ; but attend solely to the service of the  
“ gods ; and the giving comfort to thy parents. If  
“ thy father or thy mother calls thee, do not stay to be  
“ called twice ; but go instantly to know their plea-  
“ sure, that thou may not disoblige them by slowness.  
“ Return no insolent answers, nor shew any want of  
“ compliance ; but if thou canst not do what they com-  
“ mand, make a modest excuse. If another is called  
“ and does not come quickly ; come thou, hear what  
“ is ordered, and do it well. Never offer thyself to do  
“ that which thou canst not do. Deceive no person,  
“ for the gods see all thy actions. Live in peace with  
“ every body, and love every one sincerely and honest-  
“ ly, that thou mayest be beloved by them in return.

“ Be

“ Be not greedy of the goods which thou hast. If  
“ thou seest any thing presented to another, give way  
“ to no mean suspicions ; for the gods, to whom every  
“ good belongs, distribute every thing as they please.  
“ If thou wouldst avoid the displeasure of others, let  
“ none meet with it from thee.

“ Guard against improper familiarities with men ;  
“ nor yield to the guilty wishes of thy heart ; or thou  
“ wilt be the reproach of thy family, and wilt pollute  
“ thy mind as mud does water. Keep not company  
“ with dissolute, lying, or idle women ; otherwise they  
“ will infallibly infect thee by their example. Attend  
“ upon thy family, and do not go on slight occasions  
“ out of thy house, nor be seen wandering through the  
“ streets, or in the market-place ; for in such places  
“ thou wilt meet thy ruin. Remember that vice, like  
“ a poisonous herb, brings death to those who taste it ;  
“ and when it once harbours in the mind it is difficult  
“ to expel it. If in passing through the streets thou  
“ meetest with a forward youth who appears agreeable  
“ to thee, give him no correspondence, but dissemble  
“ and pass on. If he says any thing to thee, take no  
“ heed of him nor his words ; and if he follows thee,  
“ turn not your face about to look at him, lest that  
“ might inflame his passion more. If thou behavest so,  
“ he will soon turn and let thee proceed in peace.

“ Enter not, without some urgent motive, into ano-  
“ ther’s house, that nothing may be either said or  
“ thought injurious to thy honour ; but if thou enter-  
“ est into the house of thy relations, salute them with  
“ respect and do not remain idle, but immediately take  
“ up a spindle to spin, or do any other thing that oc-  
“ curs.

“ When thou art married, respect thy husband, obey  
“ him, and diligently do what he commands thee. A-  
“ void incurring his displeasure, nor shew thyself pas-  
“ sionate or ill-natured ; but receive him fondly to thy  
“ arms, even if he is poor and lives at thy expense. If  
“ thy husband occasions thee any disgust, let him not  
“ know thy displeasure when he commands thee to do  
“ any thing ; but dissemble it at that time, and after-  
“ wards tell him with gentleness what vexed thee, that  
“ he may be won by thy mildness and offend thee no  
“ farther. Dishonour him not before others ; for thou  
“ also wouldst be dishonoured. If any one comes to  
“ visit thy husband, accept the visit kindly, and shew  
“ all the civility thou canst. If thy husband is foolish,  
“ be thou discreet. If he fails in the management of  
“ wealth, admonish him of his failings ; but if he is to-  
“ tally incapable of taking care of his estate, take that  
“ charge upon thyself, attend carefully to his posses-  
“ sions, and never omit to pay the workmen punctual-  
“ ly. Take care not to lose any thing through negli-  
“ gence.

“ Embrace, my daughter, the counsel which I give  
“ thee ; I am already advanced in life, and have had  
“ sufficient dealings with the world. I am thy mother,  
“ I wish that thou mayest live well. Fix my precepts  
“ in thy heart and *bowels*, for then thou wilt live hap-  
“ py. If, by not listening to me, or by neglecting my  
“ instructions any misfortunes befall thee, the fault will  
“ be thine, and the evil also. Enough, my child. May  
“ the gods prosper thee.”

Not contented with such instructions and domestic education, the Mexicans sent their children to public schools, which were close to the temples, where they  
were



were instructed for three years in religion and good customs. Besides this, almost all the inhabitants, particularly the nobles, took care to have their children brought up in the seminaries belonging to the temples, of which there were many in the cities of the Mexican empire, for boys, youths, and young women. Those of the boys and young men were governed by priests, who were solely devoted to their education; those for young women were under the direction of matrons equally respectable for their age and for their manners. No communication between the youth of both sexes was permitted; on the contrary, any transgression of that nature was severely punished. There were distinct seminaries for the nobles and plebeians. The young nobles were employed in offices which were rather internal, and more immediately about the sanctuary, as in sweeping the upper area of the temple, and in stirring up and attending to the fires of the stoves which were before the sanctuary. The others were employed in carrying the wood which was required for the stoves, and the stone and lime used in repairing of sacred edifices, and in other similar tasks: both were under the direction of superiors and masters, who instructed them in religion, history, painting, music, and other arts, agreeably to their rank and circumstances.

The girls swept the lower area of the temple, rose three times in the night to burn copal in the stoves, prepared the meats which were daily offered to the idols, and wove different kinds of cloth. They were taught every female duty; by which, besides banishing idleness from them which is so dangerous to the age of youth, they were habituated to domestic labours. They slept in large halls in the sight of the matrons, who governed

verned them, and who attended to nothing more zealously than the modesty and decency of their actions. When any male or female pupil went to pay their respects to their parents, and which case happened very seldom, they were not allowed to go by themselves, but were always accompanied by other pupils and their superior. After listening for a few moments with silence and attention to the instructions and advice which their parents gave them, they returned back to the seminary. There they were detained until the time of marriage, which, as we have already mentioned, was with young men from the age of twenty to twenty-two, and with girls at eighteen or sixteen years. When this period arrived, either the young man himself requested leave of the superior to go and get himself a wife, or, what was more common, his parents demanded him for the same purpose, returning thanks first to the superior for the care he had taken of his instruction. The superior, upon the dismissal which he gave at the grand festival of Tezcatlipoca, to all the young men and women who were arrived at that age, made them a discourse, exhorting them to a perseverance in virtue, and the discharge of all the duties of the new state. The virgins educated in these seminaries were particularly sought after for wives, not only on account of their principles, but likewise of the skill which they acquired there in the arts belonging to their sex. The youth who when arrived at the age of twenty-two did not marry, was esteemed to have devoted himself for ever to the service of the temples, and if after such consecration of himself he repented of celibacy, and desired to marry, he became infamous for ever, and no woman would accept him for a husband. In Tlascala, those who, at the age  
fit

fit for marriage, refused taking a wife were shaven, a mark of the highest dishonour with that nation.

The sons in general learned the trades of their fathers, and embraced their professions. Thus they perpetuated the arts in families to the advantage of the state. The young men who were destined to the magistracy, were conducted by their fathers to tribunals, where they heard the laws of the kingdom explained, and observed the practice and forms of judicature. In the sixtieth picture of Mendoza's collection, are represented four judges examining a cause, and behind them four young *Teteuctin*, or *Gentlemen*, who are listening to their decision. The sons of the king, and principal lords, were appointed tutors who attended to their conduct, and long before they could enter into possession of the crown, or their state, they were entrusted with the government of some city, or smaller state, that they might learn by degrees the arduous task of governing men. This was the custom as early as the time of the first Chechemecan kings; for Nopaltzin, from the time that he was crowned king of Acolhuacan, put his first-born son Tlotzin in possession of the city of Tezcuco. Cuitlahuac, the last king of Mexico, obtained the state of Ixtapalapan, and the brother of Montezuma that of Ehecatepec, before they ascended the throne of Mexico. Upon this base of education the Mexicans supported the fabric of their political system which we are now to unfold.

From the time that the Mexicans, after the example of other neighbouring states, placed Acamapitzin at the head of their nation, investing him with the name, the honours, and authority of royalty, the crown of their kingdom was made elective; for which purpose they created



created some time after four electors, in whose judgment and decision all the suffrages of the nation were comprehended. These were four lords of the first rank of nobility, and generally of the royal blood, possessed likewise of prudence and probity adequate to the discharge of so important a function. Their office was not perpetual; their electoral power terminated with the first election, and new electors were immediately nominated, or the first were re-chosen by the votes of the nobility. If a deficiency happened in their number before the king died, it was supplied by a new appointment. In the time of king Itzcoatl, two other electors were added, which were the kings of Acolhuacan and Tacuba; but their title was merely honorary. They usually ratified the choice which was made by the four real electors; but we do not know that they ever interfered otherwise with the election.

That the electors might not be left too much at liberty, and in order to prevent the inconveniences arising from parties and factions, they fixed the crown in the family of Acamapitzin; and afterwards established a law, that when the king died he should be succeeded by one of his brothers, and on failure of brothers by one of his nephews; or on failure of them by one of his cousins, leaving it in the option of the electors to choose among the brothers, or nephews of the deceased king, the person whom they should think best qualified to govern; by means of which law they avoided numerous inconveniences that we have already mentioned. This law was observed from the time of their second, until the time of their last king. Huitzilihuitl, the son of Acamapitzin, was succeeded by his two brothers Chimalpopoca and Itzcoatl; Itzcoatl by his nephew Montezuma

Montezuma Ilhuicamina; Montezuma by his cousin Axajacatl; Axajacatl by his two brothers Tizoc and Ahuitzotl; Ahuitzotl by his nephew Montezuma II; Montezuma II. by his brother Cuitlahuatzin, to whom lastly his nephew Quauhtemotzin succeeded. This series of kings will appear more distinctly in the table of genealogy which we have already given.

In the election of a king no regard was paid to the right of primogeniture. At the death of Montezuma I. Axajacatl was elected in preference to his elder brothers Tizoc and Ahuitzotl.

No new king was elected until the funeral of his predecessor was celebrated with due pomp and magnificence.

As soon as the election was made, advice was sent to the kings of Acolhuacan and Tacuba, in order that they might confirm it, and also to the feudatory lords who had been present at the funeral. These two kings led the new-chosen sovereign to the greater temple. The feudatory lords went first, with the ensigns of their states; then the nobles of the court with the badges of their dignity and offices; the two allied kings followed next, and behind them the king elect, stripped naked, without any covering except the *maxtlatl*, the girdle, or large bandage, about his middle. He ascended the temple, resting on the arms of two nobles of the court, where one of the high-priests, accompanied by the most respectable officers of the temple, received him. He worshipped the idol of Huitzilopochtli, touching the earth with his hand, and then carrying it to his mouth. The high-priest dyed his body with a certain kind of ink, and sprinkled him four times with water which had been blessed, according to their rite, at the grand festival of Huitzilopochtli, making use for this purpose of  
branches

branches of cedar and willow, and the leaves of maize. He was clothed in a mantle, on which were painted skulls and bones of the dead, and his head was covered with two other cloaks, one black, and the other blue, on which similar figures were represented. They tied a small gourd to his neck, containing a certain powder, which they esteemed a strong preservative against diseases, forcery, and treason. Happy would that people be whose king could carry about him such a preservative. They put afterwards a censer, and a bag of copal in his hands, that he might give incense to the idol with them. When this act of religion was performed, during which the king remained on his knees, the high-priest sat down and delivered a discourse to him, in which after congratulating him on his advancement, he informed him of the obligation he owed his subjects for having raised him to the throne, and warmly recommended to him zeal for religion and justice, the protection of the poor, and the defence of his native country and kingdom. The allied kings and the nobles next addressed him to the same purpose; to which the king answered with thanks and promises to exert himself to the utmost of his power for the happiness of the state. Gomara, and other authors who have copied him, affirm, that the high-priest made him swear to maintain their ancient religion, to observe the laws of his ancestors, and to make the sun go his course, to make the clouds pour down rain, to make the rivers run, and all fruits to ripen. If it is true, that they made the king take so extravagant an oath, it is probable, that they only meant to oblige him to maintain a conduct worthy of these favours from heaven.

After



After hearing these addresses, the king descended with all his attendants to the lower area, where the rest of the nobility waited to make their obedience, and pay him homage in jewels and apparel. He was thence conducted to a chamber within the inclosure of the temple called *Tlacatecco*, where he was left by himself four days, during which time he was allowed to eat but once a day; but he might eat flesh or any other kind of food. He bathed twice every day, and after bathing he drew blood from his ears, which he offered together with some burnt copal to Huitzilopochtli, making all the while constant and earnest prayers to obtain that enlightenment of understanding which was requisite in order to govern his monarchy with prudence. On the fifth day, the nobility returned to the temple, conducting the new king to his palace, where the feudatory lords came to renew the investiture of their fiefs. Then followed the rejoicings of the people, entertainments, dances, and illuminations.

To prepare for the coronation it was necessary, according to the law of the kingdom, or the custom introduced by Montezuma I. that the new-elected king should go out to war, to procure the victims which were necessary for the sacrifices on such an occasion. They never were without enemies on whom war might be made; either from some province of the kingdom having rebelled, or from some Mexican merchants having been unjustly put to death, or on account of some insult having been offered to the royal ambassadors, of which cases history shews many examples. The arms and ensigns which the king wore upon going to war, the parade with which his prisoners were conducted to the court, and the circumstances which attended the sa-

crifice of them, shall be explained when we come to treat of the military establishment of the Mexicans ; but we are entirely ignorant of the particular ceremonies which were used at his coronation. The king of Acolhuacan was the person who put the crown upon his head. The crown which was called by the Mexicans *copilli*, was a sort of small mitre, the fore-part of which was raised up, and terminated in a point, and the part behind was lowered down, and hung over the neck in the same manner as is represented in the figures of the kings given in this history. It was composed of different materials, according to the pleasure of the kings ; sometimes made of thin plates of gold, sometimes woven with golden thread, and figured with beautiful feathers. The dress which he usually wore in the palace was the *xiubtilmatli*, which was a mantle of a blue and white mixture. When he went to the temple he put on a white habit. That which he wore to assist at councils, and other public functions, varied according to the nature and circumstances of the occasion ; one was appropriated for civil causes, and another for criminal causes ; one for acts of justice, and another for times of rejoicing : upon all these occasions he regularly wore his crown. Every time he went abroad, he was attended by a great retinue of nobility, and preceded by a noble, who held up three rods made of gold and odorous wood, by which he intimated to the people the presence of their sovereign.

The power and authority of the kings of Mexico was different at different periods. In the beginning of the monarchy their power was much circumscribed, and their authority truly paternal, their conduct more humane, and the prerogatives which they claimed from  
their

their subjects extremely moderate. With the enlargement of their territory they gradually increased their riches, their magnificence, and pomp, and in proportion to their wealth were likewise multiplied, as generally happens, the burthens on their subjects. Their pride occasioned them to trespass upon the limits, which the consent of the nation had allowed to their authority, until they arrived at that pitch of odious despotism which appears to have marked the reign of Montezuma II. but notwithstanding their tyranny, the Mexicans always preserved the respect which was due to the royal character, except that in the last year but one of the monarchy, as will be related hereafter, when they were no longer able to endure the meanness of their king Montezuma, his excessive cowardice, and low submission to his enemies, they treated him with contempt, and wounded him with arrows and stones. The pageantry and ostentatious grandeur of the last Mexican kings may be conceived from what we have said of the reign of Montezuma, and what we shall farther say in our account of the conquest.

The kings of Mexico were rivalled in magnificence by the kings of Acolhuacan, as the latter were by the former in politics. The government of the Acolhuan nation was almost the same with that of the Mexicans; but with respect to the right of succession to the crown they were totally different; for in the kingdom of Acolhuacan, and the same is to be understood of Tacuba, the sons succeeded to their fathers, not according to their birth, but according to their rank; the sons which were born of the queen, or principal wife, having been always preferred to the rest. This rule was observed from the time of Xolotl, the first Chechemecan king,  
until



until the time of Cacamatzin, who was succeeded by his brother Cuicuitzcatzin, through the intrigues of Montezuma and the conqueror Cortes.

The king of Mexico, as well as the king of Acolhuacan, had three supreme councils, composed of persons of the first nobility, in which they deliberated upon affairs relating to the government of the provinces, the revenues of the king, and to war, and in general the king resolved upon no measure of importance without having first heard the opinion of his counsellors. In the history of the conquest we shall find Montezuma in frequent deliberation with his council on the pretensions of the Spaniards. We do not know the number of members of each council, nor do historians furnish us with the lights necessary to illustrate such a subject. They have only preserved to us the names of some counsellors, particularly those of Montezuma II. In the sixty-first painting of the collection of Mendoza, are represented the council-halls, and some of the lords who composed them.

Amongst the different ministers and officers of the court there was a treasurer-general, whom they called *Hueicalpixqui*, or great major-domo, who received all the tributes which were collected by the officers of the revenue in the provinces, and kept an account of his receipts and disbursements in paintings, agreeably to the testimony of Bernal Diaz, who saw them. There was another treasurer for the gems and articles of gold, who was, at the same time, director of the artists who wrought them; and another for the works which were made of feathers, the artists of which last employment had their work-shops in the royal palace of birds. There was besides a provider-general of animals, whom they called *Huejamingui*; he had the charge of the royal woods, and  
took

took care that game was never wanting there ; and that the royal palaces were never unprovided with every sort of animal. Concerning the other royal ministers and officers, we have mentioned enough when we treated of the magnificence of Montezuma II. and of the government of the kings of Acolhuacan, Techotlala, and Nezahualcojotl.

For the office of ambassadors, they always employed persons who were both noble and eloquent. Three, four, or more persons were usually joined in this office, and, to procure respect, they wore certain badges by which they were every where known, particularly a green habit made like the scapulary, or little cloak, which some religious people wear, from which hung some locks of cotton. Their hair was twisted with beautiful feathers, from which also hung similar locks of different colours. In their right hands they carried an arrow with the point downwards ; in the left a shield, and hanging at the same arm a net, in which they carried their provision. In all the places through which they passed, they were well received, and treated with that distinction which their character demanded, provided they did not leave the great road which led to the place of their destination ; but if they ever deviated from it, they lost their rights and privileges as ambassadors. When they arrived at the place where they were to deliver their embassy, they stopped before they made entrance, and waited until the nobility of the city came out to meet them, and conduct them to the House of the Public, where they were lodged and well entertained. The nobles burnt incense to them, and presented nosegays of flowers, and after they had reposed, led them to the palace of the lord of that state, and introduced them  
into

into the hall of audience, where they were received by the lord himself, and his counsellors, who were all seated in their places. After having made a profound reverence to the lord, they sat down upon their heels in the middle of the hall, and without saying a word, or lifting up their eyes, they waited until a sign was made for them to speak. When the signal was given, the most respectable amongst the ambassadors, after having made another bow to the lord, delivered his embassy with a low voice, in a studied address, which was attentively heard by the lord and his counsellors, who kept their heads so much inclined, that they appeared almost to touch their knees. When the ambassadors had finished their interview, they returned to the house where they were lodged. In the mean while, the lord entered into consultation with his counsellors, and communicated his answer to the ambassadors by means of his ministers; provided them abundantly with provisions for their journey, made them also some presents, and caused them to be escorted out of the city by the same persons who had received them upon their arrival. If the lord, to whom the embassy was sent, was a friend to the Mexicans, it was considered as a great dishonour not to accept his presents; but if he was an enemy, the ambassadors could not receive them without the express order of their master. All these ceremonies were not invariably observed in embassies, nor were all embassies sent to the lords of cities or states; for some of them, as we shall mention hereafter, were sent to the body of the nobility, or to the people.

The couriers whom the Mexicans frequently employed, made use of different ensigns according to the nature of the intelligence, or affair with which they were charged. If it was the news of the Mexicans having  
lost



lost a battle, the courier wore his hair loose and disordered, and, without speaking a word to any person, went straight to the palace, where, kneeling before the king, he related what had happened. If it was the news of a victory which had been obtained by the arms of Mexico, he had his hair tied with a coloured string, and his body girt with a white cotton cloth ; in his left hand a shield, and in his right a sword, which he brandished as if he had been in the act of engagement ; expressing by such gestures his glad tidings, and singing the glorious actions of the ancient Mexicans, while the people, overjoyed at seeing him, led him with many congratulations to the royal palace.

In order that news might be more speedily conveyed, there were upon all the highways of the kingdom certain little towers, about six miles distant from each other, where couriers were always waiting in readiness to set out with dispatches. As soon as the first courier was sent off, he ran as swiftly as he could to the first stage, or little tower, where he communicated to another his intelligence, and delivered to him the paintings which represented the news, or the affair which was the subject of his embassy. The second courier posted without delay to the next stage, or little tower ; and thus by a continued and uninterrupted speed of conveyance, intelligence was carried so rapidly from place to place, that sometimes, according to the affirmations made by several authors, it reached the distance of three hundred miles in one day. It was by this means that fresh fish were daily brought to Montezuma II. from the gulf of Mexico, which is at least upwards of two hundred miles distant from the capital. Those couriers were exercised in running from their childhood ; and in order to en-  
courage

courage them in this exercise, the priests, under whose discipline they were trained, frequently bestowed rewards on those who were victors in a race.

With respect to the nobility of Mexico and of the whole empire, it was divided into several classes, which were confounded together by the Spaniards under the general name of *caziques* (*q*). Each class had its particular privileges and wore its own badges, by which means, although their dress was extremely simple, the character of every person was immediately understood. The nobles alone were allowed to wear ornaments of gold and gems upon their clothes, and to them exclusively belonged, from the reign of Montezuma II. all the high offices at court, in the magistracy, and the most considerable in the army.

The highest rank of nobility in Tlascala, in Huexotzinco, and in Cholula, was that of *Teuctli*. To obtain this rank it was necessary to be of noble birth, to have given proofs in several battles of the utmost courage, to be arrived at a certain age, and to command great riches for the enormous expenses which were necessary to be supported by the possessor of such a dignity. The candidate was obliged besides to undergo a year of regular penance, consisting in perpetual fasting and frequent effusions of blood, and an abstinence from all commerce whatsoever with women, and patiently enduring the insults, the reproaches, and ill-treatment, by which fortitude and constancy are put to the test. They bored the cartilage of his nose, in order to suspend from it certain grains of gold; which were the principal badge of this dignity. On the day on which he came to the possession

(*q*) The name *cazique*, which signifies *lord* or *prince*, is derived from the Haitin tongue, which was spoken in the island of Hispaniola. The Mexicans called a lord *Tlatoani*, and a noble *Pilli* and *Teuctli*.

session of it, they stripped him of the dismal habit which he had worn during the time of his penance, and dressed him in most magnificent attire: they tied his hair with a leathern riband, dyed of a red colour, at which hung beautiful feathers, and fixed also the grains of gold at his nose. This ceremony was performed, in the upper area of the greater temple, by a priest, who, after having conferred the dignity, made him a congratulatory harangue. From thence he descended to the lower area, where he joined with the nobility in a grand dance that was made there, and which was succeeded by a magnificent entertainment, which was given at his expense to all the lords of the state, for whom besides the innumerable dresses which were made in presents to them, such an abundance of meats were prepared, there were consumed upon the occasion, agreeably to the accounts of some authors, from one thousand to sixteen hundred turkies, a vast number of rabbits, deer, and other animals, and an incredible quantity of cocoas in different sorts of beverage, and of the most choice and delicate fruits of that country. The title *Teuctli* was added in the manner of a surname to the proper name of persons advanced to this dignity, as *Chechemeca-teuctli*, *Pil-teuctli*, and others. The *Teuctli* took precedence of all others in the senate, both in the order of sitting and voting, and were permitted to have a servant behind them with a feat, which was esteemed a privilege of the highest honour.

The titles of nobility amongst the Mexicans were for the most part hereditary. Even until the downfall of the empire many families that were descended of those illustrious Aztecas who founded Mexico, preserved themselves in great splendour, and several branches of those



most ancient houses are still existing, though reduced by misfortunes, and obscured and confused amongst the vulgar (*r*). It is not to be doubted that it would have been more wise policy in the Spaniards, if, instead of conducting women from Europe, and slaves from Africa, to Mexico, they had endeavoured to form by marriages, between the Mexicans and themselves, one single individual nation. If the nature of this history would permit, we could here give a demonstration of the advantages which would have been derived to both nations from such an union, and the misfortunes which were occasioned by the opposite conduct.

In Mexico, and through the whole empire almost, excepting in the royal family as we have already mentioned, the sons succeeded to all the rights of their fathers; and on failure of sons the rights fell to brothers, and if these were wanting, to nephews.

The lands of the Mexican empire were divided between the crown, the nobility, the communities, and the Temples, and there were paintings in which the property of each was distinctly represented. The lands of the crown were painted of a purple, those of the nobility of a scarlet, and those of the communities of a yellow colour. In these, at first sight, the extent and boundaries of the different estates were distinguished.

After

(*r*) It is impossible to behold without regret, the state of degradation to which some illustrious families of that kingdom have been reduced. Not very long ago was executed a locksmith, who was a descendant of the ancient kings of Michuacan: we knew a poor taylor in Mexico, who was descended of a very noble house of Coyoacan, but had been deprived of the possessions which he inherited from his illustrious ancestors. Examples of this kind are not infrequent even among the royal families of Mexico, Acolhuacan, and Tacuba; the repeated orders, which the justice and clemency of the Catholic kings caused to be made in their favour, have not been sufficient to protect them from the general calamity of their nation.

After the conquest, the Spanish magistrates made use of these instruments to decide all disputes among the Indians concerning the property or possession of lands.

Of the lands of the crown, which were called by the Mexicans *Tecpantlalli*, although the property was always vested in the king, certain lords called *Tecpanpouhque*, or *Tecpantlaca*, that is, *people of the palace*, enjoyed the temporary use and profits. These lords did not pay any tribute, nor give any thing else to the king than nosegays of flowers and different kinds of birds, which they presented to him in token of their vassalage every time that they made him a visit; but they were obliged to repair and rebuild the royal palaces whenever it was necessary, and to cultivate the gardens of the king, by assisting with their directions the populace of their district in that labour. They were obliged besides to pay court to the king, and to attend upon him every time that he appeared in public, and were therefore highly esteemed by all. When any of those lords died, his first-born son entered into possession of the lands, and into all the obligations of his father; but if he went to establish himself in another place, he lost these rights, and the king then granted them to another usufructuary; or left the choice of one to the judgment of the community in whose district the lands were situated.

The lands which they called *pillalli*, that is, lands of the nobles, were the ancient possessions of the nobles, transmitted by inheritance from father to son, or were rewards obtained from the king in recompense of services done to the crown. The first and the last could for the most part alienate their possessions, but they were not allowed to give away or sell them to plebeians; we say for the most part, because amongst these lands there

there were some granted by the king under a condition not to alienate them, but to leave them in inheritance to their sons.

Respecting the inheritance of states, regard was paid to priority of birth ; but if the first-born son was incapable of managing the possessions, the father was entirely at liberty to appoint any other son his heir, provided that he secured a provision from the rest. The daughters, at least in Tlascala, were not allowed to inherit, that the state might never fall under the government of a stranger. Even after the conquest of the Spaniards, the Tlascalans were so jealous of preserving the states in their families, that they refused to give the investiture of one of the four principalities of the republic to D. Francisco Pimentel, nephew of Coanacotzin, king of Acolhuacan (s), married with donna *Maria Maxicatzin*, niece to prince *Maxicatzin*, who, as we shall afterwards find, was the chief of the four lords that governed that republic at the arrival of the Spaniards. The fiefs commenced in that kingdom at the time that king Xolotl divided the lands of Anahuac among the Chechemecan and Acolhuan lords, under the feudal conditions, that they would preserve inviolable fidelity, acknowledge his supreme authority, and their obligation to assist their sovereign whenever it should be necessary with their persons, with their property, and their vassals. In the Mexican empire, as far as we can find, real fiefs were few in number ; and if we are to speak in the strict sense of the civil law, there were none at all ; for they were neither perpetual in

(s) Coanacotzin, king of Acolhuacan, was the Father of don Ferdinando Pimentel, who had don Francesco born to him by a Tlascalan lady. It is to be observed, that many of the Mexicans, particularly the nobles, upon being baptized, added to their Christian name a Spanish surname.



in their nature, as every year it was necessary to repeat the form of investiture, nor were the vassals of feudatories exempted from the tributes which were paid to the king by the other vassals of the crown.

The lands which were called *Altepetlalli*, that is, those of the communities of cities and villages, were divided into as many parts as there were districts in a city, and every district possessed its own part entirely distinct from, and independent of the others. These lands could not be alienated by any means whatever. Some of them were allotted to furnish provisions for the army in time of war; those were called *Melchimalli*, or *Cacalomilli*, according to the kind of provisions which they supplied. The catholic kings have assigned lands to the settlements of the Mexicans (*t*), and made proper laws to secure to them the perpetuity of such possessions; but at present many villages have been deprived of them by the great power of some individuals, assisted by the iniquity of some judges.

All the provinces that were conquered by the Mexicans were tributary to the crown, and contributed fruits, animals, and the minerals of the country, according to the rate prescribed them; and all merchants besides paid a part of their merchandizes, and all artists a certain portion of their labours. In the capital of every province was a house allotted for a magazine to contain the corn, garments, and all the other effects, which the revenue officers collected in the circle of each district. These officers were universally odious on account of the distresses which they brought on the tributary places.

Their

(*t*) The royal laws grant to every Indian village, or settlement, the territory which surrounds them to the extent of six hundred Castilian cubits, which are equal to two hundred and fifty-seven Parisian perches.

Their badges of distinction were a little rod which they carried in one hand, and a fan of feathers in the other. The treasurers of the king had paintings, in which were described all the tributary places, and the quantity and quality of the tributes. In the collection made by Mendoza, there are thirty-six paintings of this kind (*u*), and in each of these are represented the principal places of one, or of many provinces of the empire. Besides an excessive number of cotton garments, and a certain quantity of corn and feathers, which were the usual taxes laid on almost all tributary places, many other different things were paid in tribute according to the produce of different countries. In order to give our readers some idea of them, we shall mention some of the taxes which are represented in these paintings.

The cities of *Xoconochco*, *Huehuetlan*, *Mazatlan*, and others upon the coast, paid annually to the crown, besides the dresses made of cotton, four thousand handfuls of beautiful feathers of different colours, two hundred bags of cocoas, forty tygers skins, and a hundred and sixty birds of certain particular colours. *Huaxjacac*, *Cojolapan*, *Atlacuechahuajan*, and other places belonging to the Zapotecas, paid in tribute forty plates of gold of a certain size and thickness, and twenty bags of cochineal. *Tlachquiaucho*, *Azotlan*, twenty vases of a certain measure full of gold in powder. *Tochtepec*, *Otlatitlan*, *Cozamalloapan*, *Michapan*, and other places upon the

(*u*) The thirty-six paintings begin with the 13th, and end with the 48th. In the copy of them published by Thevenot, the 21st and 22d are wanting, and for the most part the figures of the tributary cities. The copy published in Mexico in 1770, is still less perfect, for it wants the 21st, 22d, 38th, 39th, and 40th of Mendoza's Collection, besides a number of errors in the interpretations; but it has the advantage over Thevenot's of having the figures of the cities, and of being all executed on plates.

the coast of the Mexican gulf, besides the garments of cotton, gold, and cocoas, were obliged to contribute seventy-four thousand handfuls of feathers, of different colours and qualities, six necklaces, two of the finest emeralds, and four of those which were ordinary; twenty ear-rings of amber, adorned with gold, and as many of crystal; a hundred small cups or jugs of liquid amber, and sixteen thousand balls of *ule*, or elastic gum. *Tepejacac*, *Quecholac*, *Tecamachalco*, *Acatzinco*, and other places of those regions, furnished four thousand sacks of lime, four thousand loads of *atatli*, or solid canes, fit to be used in buildings, and as many loads of the same canes of a smaller size, fit for making darts, and eight thousand loads of *acajetl*, or little reeds, full of aromatic substances. *Malinaltepec*, *Tlalcozaubtitlan*, *Olinallan*, *Ichcatlan*, *Qualac*, and other places of southern hot countries, six hundred cups of honey, forty large basons of *tecozahuatl*, or yellow ochre, fit for painting, a hundred and sixty axes of copper, forty round plates of gold, of a certain diameter and thickness, ten small measures of fine turquoises, and one load of ordinary turquoises. *Quaubnahuac*, *Panchimalco*, *Atlacholoajan*, *Xiubtepec*, *Huitzilac*, and other places belonging to the Tlahuicas, sixteen thousand pieces, or large sheets of paper, and four thousand *xicalli* (natural vases, of which we shall treat hereafter), of different sizes. *Quaubtitlan*, *Tehuillojocan*, and other places which were neighbouring to them, eight thousand mats, and as many seats or chairs. Other places contributed fuel, stone, a certain number of beams and planks fit for buildings, and a certain quantity of copal, &c. Some tributary people were obliged to send to the royal palaces and woods a certain number of birds and quadrupeds, namely, the people of *Xilotepec*, *Michmalajan*,



*malajan*, and other places in the country of the Otomies, which last were obliged to send the king every year forty live eagles. Concerning the Matlatzincas we know that when they were brought under subjection to the crown of Mexico by king Axajacatl, besides the tribute which they are represented to have paid, in the twenty-seventh painting of the collection of Mendoza, the further burthen was imposed on them of cultivating a field about seven hundred perches long and half as broad, for the purpose of furnishing the royal army with provisions. To conclude, a part of every thing useful, which was found in the kingdom, either amongst the productions of nature or art, was paid in tribute to the king of Mexico.

These large contributions, the great presents which the governors of provinces, and the feudatory lords made to the king, together with the spoils of war, formed the great riches of his court which excited so much admiration in the Spanish conquerors, and occasioned so much misery to his unfortunate subjects. The tributes which were at first moderate and easy, became at last excessive and enormous; for the pride and pomp of the kings kept pace with their conquests. It is true, that a great part, and perhaps the greatest part of these revenues was expended for the benefit of the same subjects in the support of a great number of ministers and magistrates for the administration of justice, in the reward of those who had done services to the state, in the relief of the indigent, particularly widows and orphans, and men grown feeble with age, which were the three classes of people most compassionated by the Mexicans, and also by opening the royal granaries in times of great scarcity to the nation; but how many of those unhappy people who were

were unable to pay the tributes demanded from them must sink under the weight of their misery, while the royal beneficence did not reach them? To oppressive taxes were added the greatest rigour in collecting them. Whoever did not pay the tribute prescribed was sold for a slave, in order to purchase with his liberty what he could not gain by his industry.

For the administration of justice, the Mexicans had various tribunals and judges. At court, and in the more considerable places of the kingdom, there was a supreme magistrate named *Cihuacoatl*, whose authority was so great that from the sentences pronounced by him, either in civil or criminal causes, no appeal could be made to any other tribunal, not even to majesty. He had the appointment of the inferior judges, and the receivers of the royal revenues within his district, rendered in their accounts to him. Any one who either made use of his ensigns, or usurped his authority, was punished with death.

The tribunal of the *Tlacatecatl*, though inferior to the first, was extremely respectable, and composed of three judges, namely of the *Tlacatecatl*, who was the chief, and from whom the tribunal took its name, and of two others who were called *Quauhnochtli* and *Tlanotlac*. They took cognizance of civil and criminal causes in the first and second instance, although sentence was pronounced in the name only of the *Tlacatecatl*. They met daily in a hall of the house of the public, which was called *Tlatzontecojan*, that is, the place where judgment is given, to which belonged porters and other officers of justice. There they listened with the utmost attention to litigations, diligently examined into causes, and pronounced sentence according to the laws. If a cause was

purely civil, there was no appeal from that court ; but if the cause was of a criminal nature, an appeal lay to the Cihuacoatl. The sentence was published by the *Tepojotl*, or public cryer, and was executed by the Quauhnochtli, who, as we have already mentioned, was one of the three judges. The public cryer, as well as the executive minister of justice, was held in high esteem amongst the Mexicans, because they were considered to be the representatives of the king.

In every district of the city resided a *Teuctli*, who was deputy of the tribunal of Tlacatecatl, and was elected annually by the commons of that district. He took cognizance, in the first instance, of the causes within his district, and daily waited upon the Cihuacoatl, or the Tlacatecatl, to report to him every thing which occurred, and to receive his orders. Besides these *Teuctli*, there were in every district certain commissaries, elected in the same manner by the commons of the district, and named *Centeclapixque* ; but they, from what appears to us, were not judges, but only guardians, charged to observe the conduct of a certain number of families committed to their care, and to acquaint the magistrates with every thing that passed. Next to the *Teuctli* were the *Taquitlatoque*, or the runners, who carried the notifications of the magistrates, and summoned guilty persons, and the *Topilli* or the officers who apprehended and made prisoners.

In the kingdom of Acolhuacan, the judicial power was divided amongst seven principal cities. The judges remained in their tribunals from sun-rise until evening. Their meals were brought to them in the tribunal-hall, and that they might not be taken off from their employment, by giving attendance upon their families, nor have  
any



any excuse for being corrupted, they were, agreeably to the usage in the kingdom of Mexico, assigned possessions and labourers, who cultivated their fields. Those possessions, as they belonged to the office, not to the officer, did not pass to his heirs but to his successors in that appointment. In causes of importance they durst not pronounce sentence, at least not in the capital, without giving information to the king. Every Mexican month, or every twenty days, an assembly of all the judges was held before the king, in order to determine all causes then undecided. If from their being much perplexed and intricate, they were not finished at that time, they were reserved for another general assembly of a more solemn nature, which was held every eighty days, and was therefore called *Nappapsallatolli*, that is, the Conference of Eighty, at which all causes were finally decided, and in the presence of that whole assembly, punishment was inflicted on the guilty. The king pronounced sentence by drawing a line with the point of an arrow upon the head of the guilty person, which was painted on the process.

In the tribunals of the Mexicans the contending parties made their own allegations: at least we do not know that they employed any other advocates. In criminal causes the accuser was not allowed any other proof than that of his witnesses; but an accused person could clear himself from guilt by his oath. In disputes about the boundaries of possessions, the paintings of the land were consulted as authentic writings.

All the magistrates were obliged to give judgment according to the laws of the kingdom which were represented by paintings. Of these we have seen many, and have extracted from them a part of that which we shall lay before our readers on the subject. The power of  
making

making laws in Tezcuco belonged always to the kings, who made those which they published, be rigorously observed. Amongst the Mexicans, the first laws were made, from what we can discover, by the body of the nobility; but afterwards the kings became the legislators of the nation, and while their authority was confined within moderate limits, they were zealous in the observance of those laws which they or their ancestors had promulgated. In the last years of the monarchy despotism altered, and changed them at caprice. We shall here enumerate those which were in force at the time the Spaniards entered into Mexico. In some of them much prudence and humanity and a strong attachment to good customs will be discovered; but in others an excess of rigour which degenerated into cruelty.

A traitor to the king or the state was torn in pieces, and his relations who were privy to the treason, and did not discover it, were deprived of their liberty.

Whoever dared in war, or at any time of public rejoicing, to make use of the badges of the kings of Mexico, of Acolhuacan, or Tacuba, or of those of the Cihuacoatl, was punished with death, and his goods confiscated.

Whoever maltreated an ambassador, minister, or courier belonging to the king, suffered death; but ambassadors and couriers were forbid on their part part to leave the high road, under pain of losing their privileges.

The punishment of death was inflicted also on those persons who occasioned any sedition amongst the people; on those who carried off, or changed the boundaries placed in the fields by public authority; and likewise on judges who gave a sentence that was unjust, or contrary to the laws, or made an unfaithful report of any cause

to

to the king, or a superior magistrate, or allowed themselves to be corrupted by bribes.

He who in war committed any hostility upon the enemy without the order of his chief, or attacked them before the signal for battle was given, or abandoned the colours, or violated any proclamation published to the army, was infallibly beheaded.

He who at market altered the measures established by the magistrates, was guilty of felony, and was put to death without delay in the same place.

A murderer forfeited his own life for his crime, even although the person murdered was but a slave.

He who killed his wife, although he caught her in adultery, suffered death; because, according to them, he usurped the authority of the magistrates, whose province it was to take cognizance of misdeeds, and punish evil-doers.

Adultery was inevitably punished with death. Adulterers were stoned to death, or their heads were bruised between two stones. This law which prescribed that adulterers should be stoned to death, is one of those which we have seen represented in the ancient paintings which were preserved in the library of the supreme college of Jesuits at Mexico. It is also represented in the last painting of the collection made by Mendoza, and is taken notice of by Gomara, Torquemada, and other authors. But they did not consider, nor did they punish as adultery, the trespass of a husband with any woman who was free, or not joined in matrimony: wherefore the husband was not bound to so much fidelity as was exacted from the wife. In all places of the empire this crime was punished, but in some places with greater severity than in others. In Ichoatlan, a woman who was  
accused



accused of adultery was summoned before the judges, and if the proofs of her crime were satisfactory, she received punishment there immediately; she was torn in pieces, and her limbs divided amongst the witnesses. In Itztepec infidelity in a woman was punished according to the sentence of the magistrates by her husband, who cut off her nose and her ears. In some parts of the empire the punishment of death was inflicted on the husband, who cohabited with his wife, after it was proved that she had violated her fidelity.

No divorce was lawful without the permission of the judges. He who desired to divorce his wife, presented himself before the tribunal and explained his reasons for it. The judges exhorted him to concord, and endeavoured to dissuade him from a separation; but if he persisted in his claim, and his reasons appeared just, they told him that he might do that which he should judge most proper, without giving their authority for a divorce by a formal sentence. If after all he divorced her, he never could recover her nor be united to her again.

Those who were guilty of incest with their nearest of blood, or relations, were hanged, and all marriages between persons so nearly connected were strictly forbid by law, excepting marriages between brothers and sisters-in-law; for amongst the Mexicans, as well as amongst the Hebrews, it was the custom that the brothers of the deceased husband might marry with their widowed sisters-in-law; but there was great difference in this practice of these two nations; for amongst the Hebrews such a marriage could only happen in one case, that was where the husband died without issue; amongst the Mexicans on the contrary, it was necessary that the deceased should leave children, of whose education the brother was to take

take charge, entering into all the rights of a father. In some places which were distant from the capital, the nobles were accustomed to marry their widowed mothers-in-law, provided their fathers had not had children by them; but in the capitals of Mexico and Tezcuco, and the places neighbouring to them, such marriages were deemed incestuous, and punished with severity.

Any person guilty of a detestable crime was hanged; if a priest, he was burnt alive. Amongst all the nations of Anahuac, excepting the Panuchese, this crime was held in abomination, and was punished by them all with rigour. Nevertheless, vicious men, in order to justify their own excesses, have defamed all the nations of America with this horrid voice; but this calumny, which several European authors have too readily admitted to be just, is proved to be false by the testimony of many other authors, who are more impartial and better informed (x).

The priest, who, during the time that he was dedicated to the service of the temple, abused any free woman, was deprived of the priesthood and banished.

If any of the young men, or young women, who were educating in the seminaries, were guilty of incontinence, they were liable to a severe punishment, and even to suffer death, according to the report of some authors. But, on the other hand, there was no punishment whatever prescribed for simple fornication, although the evil tendency of an excess of this kind was not unknown to them; and fathers frequently admonished their children to beware of it: they burned the hair of a bawd in the market-place with pine torches, and smeared her head with  
the

(x) See what we have said in our Dissertations respecting the author who has revived this atrocious calumny upon the Americans.

the resin of the same wood. The more respectable the persons were to whom she served in this capacity, so much the greater was the punishment.

According to the laws, the man who dressed himself like a woman, or the woman who dressed herself like a man, was hanged.

The thief of things of small value met with no punishment, excepting that of being obliged to restore what he had stolen; if the things were of great value, he was made the slave of the person whom he had robbed. If the thing stolen did no longer exist, nor the robber had any goods by which he could repay his robbery, he was stoned to death. If he had stolen gold or gems, after being conducted through all the streets of the city, he was sacrificed at the festival which the goldsmiths held in honour of their god Xipe. He who stole a certain number of ears of maize, or pulled up from another's field a certain number of useful trees, was made a slave of the owner of that field (*y*); but every poor traveller was permitted to take of the maize, or the fruit-bearing trees, which were planted by the side of the highway, as much as was sufficient to satisfy immediate hunger.

He who robbed in the market, was immediately put to death by the *bastinado*, in the market-place.

He also was condemned to death, who in the army robbed another of his arms or badges.

Whoever upon finding a strayed child, made it a slave, and sold it to another, as if it were his own, forfeited by that crime his liberty and his goods, one half of which was appropriated to the support of the child, and the other

(*y*) The anonymous conqueror says, that stealing of three or four ears of maize was sufficient to incur the penalty. Torquemada adds, that the penalty was death: but this was the law in the kingdom of Acolhuacan only, not in the realm of Mexico.



other half was paid to the purchaser that he might set the child at liberty. Whatever number of persons were concerned in the crime, all of them were liable to the same punishment.

To the same punishment of servitude, and to the loss of his goods, was every person liable who sold the possessions of another, which he only had in farm.

Tutors who did not give a good account of the estates of their pupils, were hanged without pardon.

The same punishment was inflicted on sons who squandered their patrimony in vices; for they said it was a great crime not to set a higher value on the labours of their fathers.

He who practised sorcery was sacrificed to the gods.

Drunkenness in youth was a capital offence; young men were put to death by the bastinado in prison, and young women were stoned to death. In men advanced in years, although it was not made capital, it was punished with severity. If he was a nobleman, he was stripped of his office and his rank, and rendered infamous; if a plebeian, they shaved him (a punishment very sensibly felt by them), and demolished his house, saying, that he who could voluntarily bereave himself of his senses, was not worthy of a habitation amongst men. This law did not forbid conviviality at nuptials, or at any other times of festivity: on such occasions it being lawful, in private houses, to drink more than usual; nor did the law affect old men of seventy years, who, on account of their age, were allowed to drink as much as they pleased; which appears represented in the forty-third painting of the collection made by Mendoza.

He who told a lie to the particular prejudice of another, had a part of his lip cut off, and sometimes his ears.

Of the Mexican laws concerning slaves it is to be observed, that there were three sorts of slaves among them. The first were prisoners of war; the second were those whom they purchased for a valuable consideration; and the third were malefactors, who were deprived of their liberty in punishment of their crimes.

The prisoners of war were generally sacrificed to their gods. He who in war took another's prisoner from him, or set him at liberty, was punished with death.

The sale of a slave was not valid, unless it was made in the presence of four lawful witnesses. In general, they assembled in greater numbers, and celebrated contracts of that nature with great solemnity.

Among the Mexicans a slave was allowed to have cattle, to acquire property, and even to purchase slaves who served him; nor could his owner hinder him, nor have service from such slaves; for slavery was only an obligation of personal service, and even that was under certain restrictions.

Nor was slavery entailed upon the descendants of slaves. All Mexicans were born free, although their mothers were slaves. If a free man impregnated another person's slave, and she died during her pregnancy, he became the slave of the owner of the female slave; but if she was happily delivered, the child as well as the father remained both free.

Necessitous parents were allowed to dispose of any one of their children, in order to relieve their poverty; and any free man might sell himself for the same purpose;

pose; but owners could not sell their slaves without their consent, unless they were slaves with a collar. Run-away, rebellious, or vicious slaves, had two or three warnings given them by their owners, which warnings they gave for their better justification in presence of some witnesses. If, in spite of these admonitions the slaves did not mend their behaviour, a wooden collar was put about their necks, and then it was lawful to sell them at market. If, after having been owned by two or three masters, they still continued intractable, they were sold for the sacrifices; but that happened very rarely. If a slave, who was collared in this manner, happened to escape from the prison where his owner confined him, and took refuge in the royal-palace, he remained free; and the person who attempted to prevent his gaining this asylum, forfeited his liberty for the attempt, except it was the owner, or one of his children, who had a right to seize him.

The persons who sold themselves were generally gamblers, who did so in order to game with the price of their liberty; or those who by laziness, or some misfortune, found themselves reduced to misery, and prostitutes, who wanted clothes to make their appearance in public; for women of that class among the Mexicans had no interest in general in their profession, but the gratification of their passions. Slavery amongst the Mexicans was not so hard to be borne, as it was among other people; for the condition of a slave among them was by no means oppressive. Their labour was moderate, and their treatment humane; when their masters died, they generally became free. The common price of a slave was a load of cotton garments.

There



There was among the Mexicans another kind of slavery, which they called *Huebuetatlacolli*, which was, where one or two families, on account of their poverty, bound themselves to furnish some lord perpetually with a slave. They delivered up one of their sons for this purpose, and after he had served for some years they recalled him, in order to let him marry, or for some other motive, and substituted another in his place. The change was made without giving any offence to the patron; on the contrary, he generally gave some consideration for a new slave. In the year 1506, on account of a great scarcity which happened then, many families were obliged to this kind of servitude; but they were all freed from it by the king of Acolhuacan, Nezahualpilli, owing to the hardships they suffered from it; and, after his example, the same thing was done by Montezuma II. in his dominions.

The conquerors, who imagined they entered into all the rights of the ancient Mexican lords, had, at first, many slaves of those nations; but when the Catholic kings were informed of it by persons of credit who were zealous for the public good, and well acquainted with the manners and customs of those people, they declared all those slaves free, and forbid, under severe penalties, any attempt against their liberty. A law infinitely just, and worthy the humanity of those monarchs; for the first religious missionaries who were employed in the conversion of the Mexicans, amongst whom were men of much learning, declared, after diligent examination, that they had not been able to find one amongst the slaves who had been justly deprived of his natural liberty.

We have now said all that we know of the Mexican legislature. More complete information on this head, and in particular concerning their civil contracts, their tribunals, and supreme councils, might have proved extremely valuable; but the unfortunate loss of the greater part of their paintings, and of some manuscripts of the first Spaniards, has deprived us of the only lights which could have illustrated this subject.

Although the laws of the capital were generally received throughout the whole empire, yet in some of the provinces many variations from them took place; for as the Mexicans did not oblige the conquered nations to speak the language of their court, neither did they compel them to adopt all their laws. The legislature of Acolhuacan was the most similar to that of Mexico; but still they differed in many particulars, and the former was far more severe than the latter.

The laws published by the celebrated king Nezahualcojotl ordained, that a thief should be dragged through the streets, and afterwards hanged. Murderers were beheaded. The agent in the crime of sodomy was suffocated in a heap of ashes; the patient had his bowels torn out, after which his belly was filled with ashes, and then he was burned. He who maliciously contrived to sow discord between two states, was tied to a tree and burned alive. He who drank till he lost his senses, if a nobleman, was immediately hanged, and his body was thrown into the lake, or into some river; if a plebeian, for the first offence, he lost his liberty, and for the second his life. And when the legislator was asked, why the law was more severe upon nobles, he answered, that the crime of drunkenness was less pardonable in them,

them, as they were more bound in duty to set a good example.

The same king prescribed the punishment of death to historians who published any falsehood in their paintings (y). He condemned robbers of the fields to the same punishment, and declared that the stealing seven ears of maize was sufficient to incur the penalty.

The Tlascalans adopted the greater part of the laws of Acolhuacan. Among them, sons, who were wanting in respect and duty to their parents, were put to death by order of the senate. Those persons who were authors of any public misfortune, and yet did not deserve to be punished with death, were banished. Generally speaking, among all the polished nations of Anahuac, murder, theft, lying, adultery, and other similar crimes of incontinence, were rigorously punished, and that which we have already observed, when speaking of their character, appears to be verified in every thing, namely, that they were (as they still are) naturally inclined to severity and rigour, and more vigilant to punish vice than to reward virtue.

Among the punishments prescribed by the legislators of Mexico against malefactors, that of the fork or gallows was reckoned the most ignominious. That of banishment was also thought infamous, as it supposed the guilty person possessed of an infectious vice. That of whipping is not found among their laws; nor do we know that it was ever made use of except by parents to their children, or masters to their pupils.

They

(y) This law against false historians is attested by D. Ferdinando d' Alba Ixtlilxochitl (who was a descendant of that legislator), in his valuable manuscripts.



They had two sorts of prisons : one similar to modern prisons, called *Teilpilojan*, which was appropriated for debtors who refused to pay their debts, and for such persons as were guilty of crimes not deserving death ; the other called *Quauhcalli*, resembling a cage, was used to confine prisoners who were to be sacrificed, and persons guilty of capital offences. Both of them were well watched and strongly guarded. Those who were to be capitally punished were fed very sparingly, in order that they might taste by anticipation the bitterness of death. The prisoners on the contrary were well nourished, in order that they might appear in good flesh at the sacrifice. If through the negligence of the guard, any prisoner escaped from the cage, the community of the district, whose duty it was to supply the prisons with guards, was obliged to pay to the owner of the fugitive, a female slave, a load of cotton garments, and a shield.

Having treated thus far of the civil, it is now become necessary to say something of the military government of the Mexicans. No profession was held in more esteem amongst them than the profession of arms. The deity of war was the most revered by them, and regarded as the chief protector of the nation. No prince was elected king, until he had, in several battles, displayed proofs of his courage and military skill, and merited the splendid post of general of the army ; and no king was crowned, until he had taken, with his own hands, the victims which were to be sacrificed at the festival of his coronation.

All the Mexican kings, from Itzcoatl the first, down to Quauhtemotzin, who was their last, rose from the command of the army to the government of the kingdom.

dom. Those who died for the sake of their country, with their arms in their hands, were imagined to be the happiest souls in another life. From the great esteem in which the profession of arms was held amongst them, they were at much pains to make their children courageous, and to inure them from the earliest infancy to the hardships of war. It was this elevated notion of the glory of arms, which formed those heroes, whose illustrious actions we have already related : which made them shake off the yoke of the Tepanecas, and erect on so humble a foundation, so famous and celebrated a monarchy : and lastly, which produced the extension of their dominions from the banks of the lake to the shores of the two opposite seas.

The highest military dignity was that of general of the army ; but there were four different ranks of generals, of which the most respectable was that of *Tlacochcalcatl* (z), and each rank had its particular badges of distinction. We are uncertain in what degree the other three ranks were subordinate to the first ; nor can we even tell their names, on account of the different opinions of authors on this head (a). Next to the generals were the captains, each of whom commanded a certain number of soldiers.

In

(z) Some authors say that *Tlacochcalcatl*, signifies prince of the darts : but unquestionably it means only, inhabitant of the arsenal, or house of the darts.

(a) The interpreter of Mendoza's Collection says, that the names of the four ranks of generals, were *Tlacochcalcatl*, *Atempanecatl*, *Exbuacatecatl*, and *Tlil-lancalqui*. Acofta, instead of *Atempanecatl*, says *Tlacatecatl*, and instead of *Exbuacatecatl*, *Exbuabuacatl* ; and adds, that these were the names of the four electors. Torquemada adopts the name of *Tlacatecatl*, but sometimes he makes his rank inferior to the *Tlacochcalcatl*, and at other times he confounds them together.

In order to reward the services of warriors, and give them every kind of encouragement, the Mexicans devised three military orders, called *Achcaubtin*, *Quaubtin*, and *Oocelo*, or Princes, Eagles, and Tygers. The persons belonging to the order of princes, who were called *Quachicstin*, were the most honoured. They wore their hair tied on the top of their heads with a red string, from which hung as many locks of cotton as they had performed meritorious actions. This honour was so much esteemed among them, that the kings themselves, as well as the generals, were proud of having it conferred upon them. Montezuma II. belonged to this order, as Acofta affirms, and also king Tizoc, as appears in the paintings of him. The Tygers were distinguished by a particular armour which they wore, it being spotted like the skins of these wild animals; but such insignia were only made use of in war: at court all the officers of the army wore a dress of mixed colours, which was called *Tlachquaubjo*. No persons on the first time of their going to war, were allowed to wear any badge of distinction; they were dressed in a coarse white habit, of cloth made from the aloe; and this rule was so strictly observed, that it was even necessary for the princes of the royal blood to give some proofs of their courage before they could be entitled to change that plain dress for another more costly, called *Teucaliubqui*. The members of those military orders, besides the exterior marks of distinction which they wore, were allotted particular apartments in the royal palace, whenever they waited upon the king as guards. They were allowed to have furniture in their houses made of gold, to wear the finest cotton dress, and finer shoes than those of the common people; but no soldier



had permission to do this until he had gained, by his bravery, some advancement in the army. A particular dress called *Tlacatzuibqui* was given as a reward to the foldier, who, by his example, encouraged a dispirited army to renew battle with vigour.

When the king went to war, he wore besides his armour, particular badges of distinction; on his legs, half boots made of thin plates of gold; on his arms, plates of the same metal, and bracelets of gems; at his under lip hung an emerald set in gold; at his ears, ear-rings of the same stone; about his neck a necklace, or chain of gold and gems, and a plume of beautiful feathers on his head; but the badge most expressive of majesty, was a work of great labour made of beautiful feathers, which reached from the head all down the back (*b*). The Mexicans were very attentive to distinguish persons, particularly in war, by different badges.

The defensive and offensive arms which were made use of by the Mexicans, and the other nations of Anahuac, were of various sorts. The defensive arms common to the nobles and plebeians, to the officers and foldiers, were shields, which they called *Chimalli* (*c*), and were made of different forms and materials. Some of them were perfectly round, and others were rounded only in the under part. Some were made of *otatli*, or solid elastic canes, interwoven with thick cotton threads, and

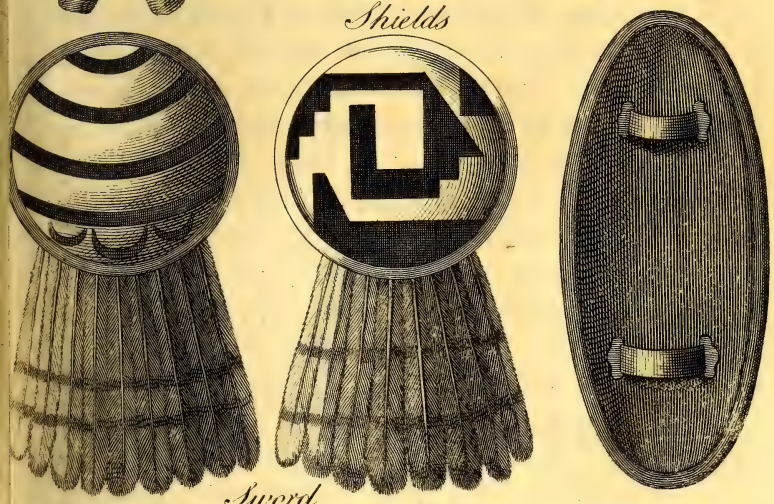
(*b*) All these royal insignia had their particular names. The boots were called *cozebuatl*, the brachials *matermcatl*, the bracelets *matzopeztli*, the emerald at the lip *tentetl*, the ear-rings *nacochili*, the necklace *cozcapetlatl*, and the principal badge of feathers *quachibilli*.

(*c*) Solis pretends, that the shield was used only by lords; but the anonymous conqueror, who frequently saw the Mexicans in arms, and was engaged in many battles against them, asserts expressly, that this armour was common to all ranks. No author has informed us more accurately than he of the Mexican armour.

*Mexican Armour*



*Shields*



*Sword*



*Lawson sc.*

WILSON'S PATENT





and covered with feathers; those of the nobles with thin plates of gold; others were made of large tortoise-shells, adorned with copper, silver, and gold, according to the wealth of the owner, or his rank in the army. These were of a moderate size; but others were so excessively large, that they could occasionally cover the whole body; but when it was not necessary to use them, they could compress them, and carry them under their arms like the parasols of the moderns; it is probable, they were made of the skins of animals, or cloth waxed with *ule*, or elastic gum (*d*). On the other hand, many of their shields were very small, more beautiful than strong, and adorned with fine feathers; these were not employed in war, but only at the entertainments which they made in imitation of a battle.

The defensive arms peculiar to the officers were breast-plates of cotton, one and sometimes two fingers thick, which were arrow-proof; and on this account the Spaniards themselves made use of them in the war against the Mexicans. The name *Ichcabuepilli*, which the Mexicans gave to this sort of breast-plate, was changed by the Spaniards into the word *Eiscaupil*. Over this sort of cuirass, which only covered part of the breast, they put on another piece of armour, which, besides the chest, covered the thighs, and the half of the arms, figures of which appear in the plate representing the Mexican armour. The lords were accustomed to wear a thick upper coat of feathers, over a cuirass made of several plates of gold, or silver gilt, which rendered them invulnerable, not only by arrows, but even by darts or swords, as the anonymous conqueror affirms.

Besides

(*d*) These large shields are mentioned by the anonymous conqueror, Didaco Godoi, and Bernal Dias, who were all present at the conquest.

Besides the armour which they wore for the defence of their chests, their arms, their thighs, and even their legs; their heads were usually cased in the heads of tygers, or serpents, made of wood, or some other substance, with the mouth open, and furnished with large teeth that they might inspire terror, and so animated in appearance, that the above mentioned author says, they seemed to be vomiting up the soldiers. All the officers and nobles wore a beautiful plume of feathers on their heads, in order to add to the appearance of their stature. The common soldiers went entirely naked, except the *maxtlatl*, or girdle, which covered the private parts; but they counterfeited the dress which they wanted by different colours, with which they painted their bodies. The European historians, who express so much wonder at this, have not observed how common the same practice was among the ancient nations of Europe itself.

The offensive arms of the Mexicans were arrows, slings, clubs, spears, pikes, swords, and darts. Their bows were made of a wood, which was elastic and difficult to break, and the string of the sinews of animals, or the hair of the stag. Some of their bows were so large (as they are at present among some nations of that continent), that they required more than five feet length of string. Their arrows were made of hard rods, pointed with the sharp bone of a fish, or other animal, or a piece of flint, or *itztli*. They were extremely expert at drawing the bow, and very dextrous marksmen, being exercised in it from childhood, and encouraged by rewards from their masters and parents. The Tehuacanese nation was particularly famous for their skill in shooting two or three arrows together. The surprising feats of dexterity, which have been exhibited even in our time  
by

by the Taraumarese, the Hiaquese, and other people of those regions, who still use the bow and arrow, enable us to judge of the expertness and excellence of the ancient Mexicans in that way (*e*). No people of the country of Anahuac ever made use of poisoned arrows; this was probably owing to their desire of taking their enemies alive for the purpose of sacrificing them.

The *Maquahuatl*, called by the Spaniards *Spada*, or sword, as it was the weapon among the Mexicans, which was equivalent to the sword of the old continent, was a stout stick three feet and a half long, and about four inches broad, armed on each side with a sort of razors of the stone *itztli*, extraordinarily sharp, fixed and firmly fastened to the stick with gum lack (*f*), which were about three inches long, one or two inches broad, and as thick as the blade of our ancient swords. This weapon was so keen, that once it entirely beheaded a horse at one stroke, according to the affirmation of Acosta; but the first stroke only was to be feared; for the razors became soon blunt. They tied this weapon by a string to their arm, lest they might lose it in any violent conflict. The form of the maquahuatl is described by several historians, and is represented in one of the plates of this history.

The

(*e*) The dexterity of those people in shooting arrows would not be credible, were it not well ascertained by the depositions of a variety of eye-witnesses. It was usual for a number of archers to assemble together, and throw up an ear of maize into the air, at which they immediately shot with such quickness and dexterity, that before it could reach the ground it was stripped of every grain.

(*f*) Hernandez says, that one stroke of the maquahuatl was sufficient to cut a man through the middle; and the anonymous conqueror attests, that he saw in an engagement a Mexican, with one stroke which he gave a horse in the belly, make his intestines drop out; and another, who with one stroke which he gave a horse upon the head, laid him dead at his feet.



The pikes of the Mexicans, instead of iron, were pointed with a large flint, but some of them also with copper. The Chinantecas, and some people of Chiapan, made use of pikes so monstrous, that they exceeded three perches, or eighteen feet in length, and the conqueror Cortes employed them against the cavalry of his rival Panfilo Navaez.

The *Tlacochtli*, or Mexican dart, was a small lance of *otatli*, or some other strong wood, the point of which was hardened by fire, or shod with copper, or *itztli*, or bone, and many of them had three points, in order to make a triple wound at every stroke.

They fixed a string to their darts (g), in order to pull them back again, after they had launched them at the enemy. This was the weapon which was the most dreaded by the Spanish conquerors; for they were so expert at throwing them, that they pierced the body of an enemy through and through. The soldiers were armed in general with a sword, a bow and arrows, a dart, and a sling. We do not know, whether in war, they ever made use of their axes, of which we shall shortly speak.

They had also standards and musical instruments proper for war. Their standards, which were more like the *Signum* of the Romans than our colours, were staves from eight to ten feet long, on which they carried the arms or ensigns of the state, made of gold, or feathers, or some other valuable materials. The armorial ensign of the Mexican empire, was an eagle in the act of darting upon a tyger; that of the republic of Tlascala, an eagle

(g) The Mexican dart was of that kind of darts which the Romans used to call *Hastile*, *Faculum*, or *Telum amentatum*, and the Spanish name *Amento* or *Ameinto*, which the historians of Mexico have adopted, means the same thing as the *Amentum* of the Romans.

eagle with its wings spread (*b*); but each of the four lordships which composed the republic, had its proper ensign. That of Ocotelolco, was a green bird upon a rock; that of Tizatlan, a heron upon a rock also; that of Tepeticpac, a fierce wolf, holding some arrows in his paws; and that of Quiahuiztlan, a parasol of green feathers. The standard which the conqueror Cortes took in the famous battle of Otompan, was a net of gold, which, in all probability, was the standard of some city situated on the lake. Besides the common and principal standard of the army, every company, consisting of two or three hundred soldiers, carried its particular standard, and was not only distinguished from others by it, but likewise by the colour of the feathers, which the officers and nobles bore upon their armour. The standard-bearer of the army, at least in the last years of the empire, was the general, and those of the companies, most probably, were borne by their commanding officers. Those standards were so firmly tied upon the backs of the officers, that it was almost impossible to detach them without cutting the standard-bearers to pieces. The Mexicans always placed their standard in the centre of their army. The Tlascalans, when they marched their troops in time of peace placed it in the van, but in the time of war, in the rear of their army.

Their martial music in which there was more noise than harmony, consisted of drums, horns, and certain sea-shells which made an extremely shrill sound.

Previous to a declaration of war, the supreme council examined into the cause which induced them to undertake

(*b*) Gomara says, that the armorial ensign of the republic of Tlascala was a crane; but other historians, better informed than he was, affirm that it was an eagle.

take it, which was for the most part the rebellion of some city or province, the putting to death unlawfully some Mexican, Acolhuan, or Tepanecan couriers, or merchants, or some gross insult offered to their ambassadors. If the rebellion originated in some of the chiefs, and not among the people, the guilty persons were conducted to the capital and punished. But if the people were also in fault, satisfaction was demanded from them in the name of the king. If they submitted, and manifested a sincere repentance, their crime was pardoned, and they were advised to better conduct; but if, instead of submission, they answered with arrogance, and persisted in denying the satisfaction demanded, or offered any new insult to the messengers which were sent to them, the affair was discussed in the council, and if war was resolved upon, proper orders were given to the generals. Sometimes the kings, in order to justify their conduct more fully before they made war upon any state or place, sent three different embassies; the first to the lord of the state which had given offence, requiring from him a suitable satisfaction, and also prescribing a time for the same, on pain of being treated as an enemy; the second, to the nobles, that they might persuade their lord to make a submission, and escape the punishment which threatened him; and the third to the people, in order to make them acquainted with the occasion of the war; and very often, as a certain historian asserts, the arguments made use of by the ambassadors were so powerful, and the advantages of peace, and the distresses of war, were so forcibly represented, that an accommodation took place between the parties. They used also to send along with ambassadors the idol of Huitzilopochtli, enjoining the people who were stirring up a war to give it a place among



among their gods. If they on the one hand found themselves strong enough to resist, they rejected the proposition, and dismissed the strange god ; but if they thought themselves unable to sustain a war, they received the idol, and placed it among their provincial gods, and answered to the embassy with a large present of gold, gems, or beautiful feathers, acknowledging their subjection to the sovereign.

If war was to be commenced, previous to every thing else they sent advice of it to the enemy, that they might prepare for defence, considering nothing more mean and unworthy of brave people than to attack the unguarded : for this purpose therefore, they sent before them several shields, which were the signals of a challenge, and likewise some cotton dresses. When one king was challenged by another, they used also the ceremony of anointing, and fixing feathers upon his head, which was done by the ambassador, as happened at the challenge given by king Itzcoatl to the tyrant Maxtlaton ; they next despatched spies, who were called *Quimichtin*, or forcerers, and were to go in disguise into the country of the enemy, to observe their number and motions, and the quality of the troops which they mustered. If they were successful in this commission they were amply rewarded. Lastly, after having made some sacrifices to the god of war, and to the tutelar deities of the state or city on which the war was made, in order to merit their protection, the army marched, but not formed into wings, or ranked in files, but divided into companies, each of which had its leader, and its standard. When the army was numerous it was reckoned by *Xiquipilli* ; and each *xiquipilli* consisted of eight thousand men. It is extremely probable, that each of these bodies was commanded by a Tlacate-

VOL. II. Y catl,

catl, or other general. The place where the first battle was usually fought was a field appointed for that purpose in some province, and called *Jaotlalli*, or land or field of battle. They began battle (as was usual in ancient Europe, and among the Romans), with a most terrible noise of warlike instruments, shouting and whistling, which struck terror to those who were not accustomed to hear it, as the anonymous conqueror declares from his own experience. Amongst the people of Tezcuco, and likewise, most probably, amongst those of other states, the king, or the general, gave the signal for battle, by the beat of a little drum which hung at his shoulder. Their first onset was furious; but they did not all engage at once, as some authors have reported; for they were accustomed, as is manifest from their history, to keep troops in reserve, for pressing emergencies. Sometimes they began battle with shooting arrows, and sometimes with darts and flinging of stones; and when their arrows were exhausted, they made use of their pikes, clubs, and swords. They were extremely attentive to keep their troops united and firmly together, to defend the standard, and to carry off the dead and the wounded from the sight of the enemy. There were certain men of the army who had no other employment than to remove from the eyes of the enemy every object which could heighten their courage and inflame their pride. They made frequent use of ambuscades, concealing themselves in bushy places or ditches made on purpose, of which the Spaniards had often experience; and frequently also they pretended flight, in order to lead the enemy in pursuit of them into some dangerous situation, or to charge them behind with fresh troops. Their great aim in battle was not to kill, but to make prisoners of  
of

of their enemies for sacrifices ; nor was the bravery of a soldier estimated by the number of dead bodies which he left on the field, but by the number of prisoners which he presented to the general after the battle, and this was unquestionably the principal cause of the preservation of the Spaniards, in the midst of the dangers to which they were exposed, and particularly on that memorable night when they were defeated, and obliged to retreat from the capital. When an enemy, whom they had once conquered, attempted to save himself by flight, they hamstrung him to prevent his escape. When the standard of the army was taken by the enemy, or their general fell, they all fled, nor was it possible then by any human art to rally or recall them.

When the battle was over, the victors celebrated the victory with great rejoicings, and rewarded the officers and soldiers who had made some prisoners. When the king of Mexico in person, took an enemy prisoner, embassies came from all the provinces of the kingdom to congratulate him upon the occasion, and to offer him some present. This prisoner was clothed with the finest habits, adorned with jewels, and carried in a litter to the capital, where the citizens came out to meet him, with music and loud acclamations. When the day of the sacrifice arrived, the king having fasted the day before, according to the custom of owners of prisoners, they carried the royal prisoner, adorned with the ensigns of the sun, to the altar for common sacrifices, where he was sacrificed by the high-priest. The priest sprinkled his blood towards the four principal winds, and sent a vessel full of the same to the king, who ordered it to be sprinkled on all the idols within the inclosure of the greater temple, as a token of thanks for the victory obtained  
over



over the enemies of the state. They hung up the head in some very lofty place, and after the skin of the body was dried, they filled it with cotton, and hung it up in the royal palace, in memory of the glorious deed; in which circumstance however, their adulation to him was conspicuous.

When any city was to be besieged, the greatest anxiety of the citizens was to secure their children, their women and sick persons; for which purpose they sent them off, at an early opportunity, to another city, or to the mountains. Thus they saved those defenceless individuals from the fury of the enemy, and obviated an unnecessary consumption of provisions.

For the defence of places they made use of various kinds of fortifications, such as walls, and ramparts, with their breast-works, palisadoes, ditches, and intrenchments. Concerning the city of Quauhquechollan, we know that it was fortified by a strong stone wall, about twenty feet high, and twelve feet in thickness (*i*).

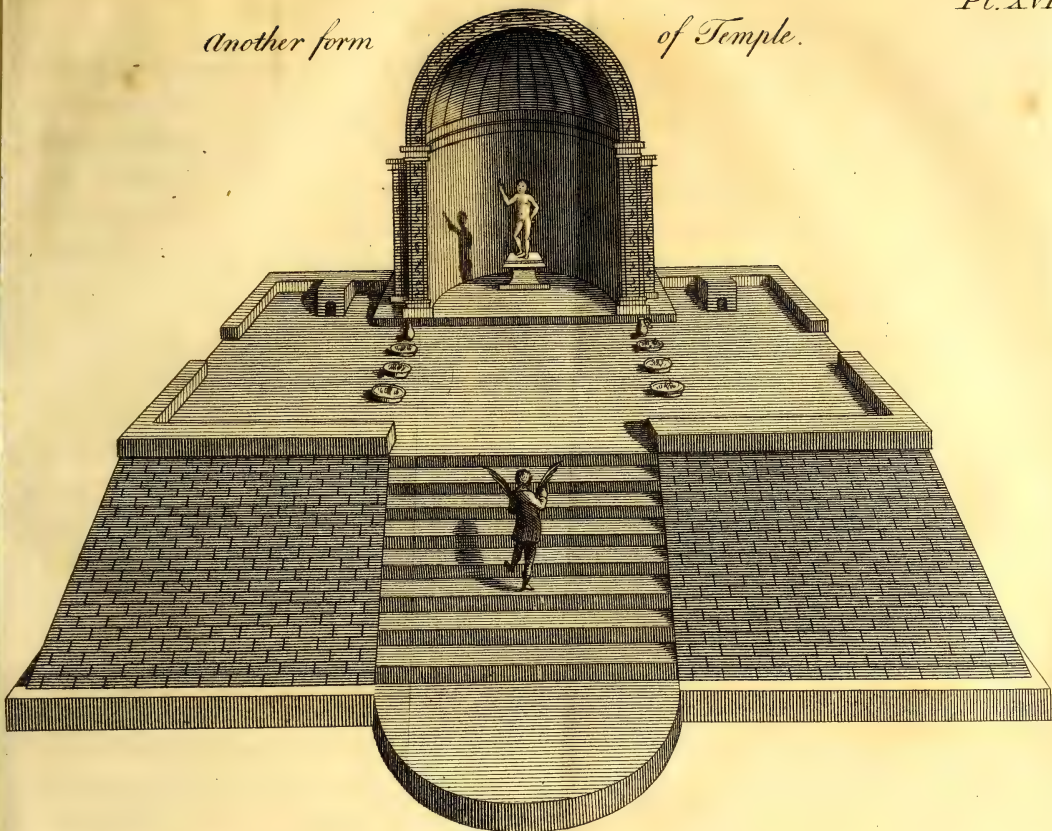
The conquerors, who describe to us the fortifications of this city, make mention likewise of several others, among which is the celebrated wall which the Tlascalans built on the eastern boundaries of the republic, to defend themselves from the invasion of the Mexican troops, which were garrisoned in Iztacmaxtitlan, Xocotlan, and other places. This wall, which stretched from one mountain to another, was six miles in length, eight feet in height, besides the breast-work, and eighteen feet in thickness. It was made of stone, and strong fine mortar (*k*). There was but one narrow entrance of about eight feet

(*i*) In the ninth book we shall give a description of the fortifications of Quauhquechollan.

(*k*) Bernal Dias says, that the Tlascalan wall was built of stone and lime, and

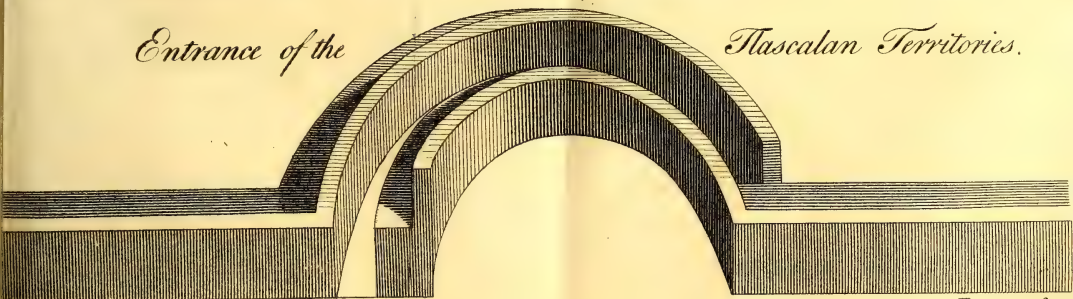
*Another form*

*of Temple.*



*Entrance of the*

*Atascalan Territories.*



*Lawson sc.*

*designed by J. P. Thompson*





feet broad, and forty paces long ; this was the space between the two extremities of the wall, the one of which encircled the other, forming two semicircles, with one common centre. This will be better understood from the figure of it which we present to our readers. There are still some remains of this wall to be seen.

There are also to be seen still the remains of an ancient fortress built upon the top of a mountain, at a little distance from the village of Molcaxac, surrounded by four walls, placed at some distance from each other, from the base of the mountain unto the top. In the neighbourhood appear many small ramparts of stone and lime, and upon a hill, two miles distant from that mountain, are the remains of some ancient and populous city, of which, however, there is no memory among historians. About twenty-five miles from Cordova, towards the north, is likewise the ancient fortress of *Quauhatocho*, (now *Guatusco*), surrounded by high walls of extremely hard stone, to which there is no entrance but by ascending a number of very high and narrow steps ; for in this manner the entrance to their fortresses was formed. From among the ruins of this ancient building, which is now over-run with bushes, through the negligence of those people, a Cordovan gentleman lately dug out several well-finished statues of stone, for the ornament of his house. Near to the ancient court of Tezcuco, a part of the wall which surrounded the city of Coatlican, is still preserved. We wish that our countrymen would attend to the preservation of those few remains of the military architecture of the Mexicans, particularly as they have suffered

so

and with a bitumen so strong it was necessary to use pick-axes to undo it. Cortes, on the other hand affirms, that it was built of dry stones. We are disposed rather to give credit to Bernal Dias ; because he asserts, he had attentively examined this wall, although like an illiterate person, he gives the name of bitumen to the mortar or cement made use of by those nations.

so many other valuable remains of their antiquity to go to ruin (*l*).

The capital of Mexico, though sufficiently fortified by its natural situation for those times, was rendered impregnable to its enemies by the industry of its inhabitants. There was no access to the city but by the roads formed upon the lake; and to make it still more difficult in time of war, they built many ramparts upon these roads, which were intersected with several deep ditches, over which they had drawbridges, and those ditches were defended by good entrenchments. Those ditches were the graves of many Spaniards and Tlascalans, on the memorable night of the first of July, of which we shall speak hereafter; and the cause which retarded the taking of that great city, by so numerous and well equipped an army, as that which Cortes employed to besiege it; and which, had he not been assisted by the brigantines, would have delayed it much longer, and occasioned the loss of a great deal more blood. For the defence of the city by water, they had many thousand small vessels, and frequently exercised themselves in naval engagements.

But the most singular fortifications of Mexico were the temples themselves, and especially the greater temple, which resembled a citadel. The wall which surrounded the whole of the temple, the five arsenals there which were filled with every sort of offensive and defensive arms, and the architecture of the temple itself which rendered the ascent to it so difficult, gives us clearly to understand, that in such buildings, policy, as well as religion, had a share; and that they constructed them, not  
only

(*l*) These imperfect accounts of those remains of Mexican antiquities, obtained from eye-witnesses worthy of the utmost credit, persuade us, that there are still many more of which we have no knowledge, owing to the indolence and neglect of our countrymen. See what is said in our dissertations respecting those antiquities against Sig. de P. and Dr. Robertson.

only from motives of superstition, but likewise for the purpose of defence. It is well known from their history, that they fortified themselves in their temples when they could not hinder the enemy from entering into the city, and from thence harraffed them with arrows, darts, and stones. In the last book of this history, will appear how long the Spaniards were in taking the greater temple, where five hundred Mexican nobles had fortified themselves.

The high esteem in which the Mexicans held every thing relating to war, did not divert their attention from the arts of peace. First, agriculture, which is one of the chief occupations of civil life, was, from time immemorial, exercised by the Mexicans, and almost all the people of Anahuac. The Toltecan nation employed themselves diligently in it, and taught it to the Chechemecan hunters. With respect to the Mexicans, we know that during the whole of their peregrination, from their native country Aztlan, unto the lake where they founded Mexico, they cultivated the earth in all those places where they made any considerable stop, and lived upon the produce of their labour. When they were brought under subjection to the Colhuan and Teapanecan nations, and confined to the miserable little islands on the lake, they ceased for some years to cultivate the land, because they had none, until necessity, and industry together, taught them to form moveable fields and gardens, which floated on the waters of the lake. The method which they pursued to make those, and which they still practise, is extremely simple.

They plait and twist willows, and roots of marsh plants, or other materials together, which are light, but capable of supporting the earth of the garden firmly united.



united. Upon this foundation they lay the light bushes which float on the lake, and over all, the mud and dirt which they draw up from the bottom of the same lake. Their regular figure is quadrangular; their length and breadth various; but as far as we can judge, they are about eight perches long, and not more than three in breadth, and have less than a foot of elevation above the surface of the water. These were the first fields which the Mexicans owned after the foundation of Mexico; there they first cultivated the maize, great pepper, and other plants, necessary for their support. In progress of time as those fields grew numerous from the industry of those people there were among them gardens of flowers and odoriferous plants, which were employed in the worship of their gods, and served for the recreation of the nobles. At present they cultivate flowers, and every sort of garden herbs upon them. Every day of the year, at sun-rise, innumerable vessels loaded with various kinds of flowers and herbs, which are cultivated in those gardens, are seen arriving by the canal, at the great market-place of that capital. All plants thrive there surprisingly; the mud of the lake is an extremely fertile soil, and requires no water from the clouds. In the largest gardens there is commonly a little tree, and even a little hut to shelter the cultivator, and defend him from rain, or the sun. When the owner of a garden, or the *Chinampa*, as he is usually called, wishes to change his situation, to remove from a disagreeable neighbour, or to come nearer to his own family, he gets into his little vessel, and by his own strength alone, if the garden is small, or with the assistance of others, if it is large, he tows it after him, and conducts it wherever he pleases with the little tree and hut

hut upon it. That part of the lake where those floating gardens are, is a place of infinite recreation where the senses receive the highest possible gratification.

As soon as the Mexicans had shaken off the Tepanecan yoke, and had gained by their conquests lands fit for cultivation, they applied themselves with great diligence to agriculture. Having neither ploughs, nor oxen, nor any other animals proper to be employed in the culture of the earth, they supplied the want of them by labour, and other more simple instruments. To hoe and dig the ground they made use of the *Coatl* (or *Coa*), which is an instrument made of copper, with a wooden handle, but different from a spade or mattock. They made use of an axe to cut trees, which was also made of copper, and was of the same form with those of modern times, except that we put the handle in the eye of the axe, whereas they put the axe into an eye of the handle. They had several other instruments of agriculture; but the negligence of ancient writers on this subject has not left it in our power to attempt their description.

For the refreshment of their fields they made use of the water of rivers and small torrents which came from the mountains, raising dams to collect them, and forming canals to conduct them. Lands which were high, or on the declivity of mountains, were not sown every year, but allowed to lie fallow until they were over-run with bushes, which they burned, to repair by their ashes, the salt which rains had washed away. They surrounded their fields with stone inclosures, or hedges made of the *metl*, or aloe, which make an excellent fence; and in the month Panquetzalitzli, which began,

as we have already mentioned, on the third of December, they were repaired if necessary (*m*).

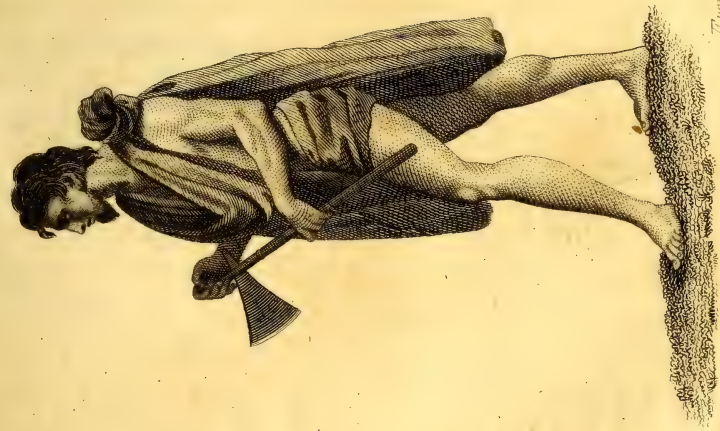
The method they observed in sowing of maize, and which they still practise in some places, is this. The sower makes a small hole in the earth, with a stick or drill probably, the point of which is hardened by fire; into this hole he drops one or two grains of maize from a basket which hangs from his shoulder, and covers them with a little earth by means of his foot; he then passes forward to a certain distance, which is greater or less according to the quality of the soil, opens another hole, and continues so in a straight line unto the end of the field; from thence he returns, forming another line parallel to the first. The rows of plants by these means are as straight as if a line was made use of, and at as equal distances from each other as if the spaces between were measured. This method of sowing, which is now used by a few of the Indians only, though more slow (*n*), is, however of some advantage, as they can more exactly proportion the quantity of seed to the strength of the soil; besides, that there is almost none of the seed lost which is sown. In consequence of this, the crops of the fields which are cultivated in that manner are usually more plentiful. When the maize springs up to a certain height, they cover the foot of the plant round with earth, that it may be better nourished, and more able to withstand sudden gusts of wind.

In the labours of the field the men were assisted by the women. It was the business of the men to dig and hoe the ground, to sow, to heap the earth about the plants,

(*m*) This is called a *penguin fence* in Jamaica, and the windward islands.

(*n*) This manner of sowing is not so slow as might be imagined, as the country people used to this method do it with wonderful quickness.





Engraved by Alexr. Lawson.  
Printed by T. Brown.



plants, and to reap; to the women it belonged to strip off the leaves from the ears, and to clear the grain; to weed and to shell it was the employment of both.

They had places like farm yards, where they stripped off the leaves from the ears, and shelled them, and granaries to preserve the grain. Their granaries were built in a square form, and generally of wood. They made use of the *ojametl* for this purpose, which is a very lofty tree, with but a few slender branches, and a thin smooth bark; the wood of it is extremely pliant, and difficult to break or rot. These granaries were formed by placing the round and equal trunks of the *ojametl* in a square, one upon the other, without any labour except that of a small notch towards their extremities, to adjust and unite them so perfectly as not to suffer any passage to the light. When the structure was raised to a sufficient height, they covered it with another set of cross-beams, and over these the roof was laid to defend the grain from rains. Those granaries had no other door or outlet than two windows, one below which was small, and another somewhat wider above. Some of them were so large as to contain five or six thousand, or sometimes more *fanegas* (o) of maize. There are some of this sort of granaries to be met with in a few places at a distance from the capital, and amongst them some so very ancient, that they appear to have been built before the conquest; and, according to the information we have had from persons of intelligence, they preserve the grain better than those which are constructed by the Europeans.

Close to fields which were sown they commonly erected a little tower of wood, branches and mats, in which  
a man

(o) A Castilian measure of dry goods, formerly mentioned by us.



a man defended from the sun and rain kept watch, and drove away the birds which came in flocks to consume the young grain. Those little towers are still made use of even in the fields of the Spaniards on account of the excessive number of birds.

The Mexicans were also extremely well skilled in the cultivation of kitchen and other gardens, in which they planted with great regularity and taste, fruit-trees, and medicinal plants and flowers. The last of those were much in demand, not less on account of the particular pleasure taken in them, than of the custom which prevailed of presenting bunches of flowers to their kings, lords, ambassadors, and other persons of rank, besides the excessive quantity which were made use of in the temples and private oratories. Amongst the ancient gardens, of which an account has been handed down to us, the royal gardens of Mexico and Tezcuco, which we have already mentioned, and those of the lords of Iztapalapan and Huaxtepec, have been much celebrated. Among the gardens of the great palace of the lord of Iztapalapan, there was one, the extent, disposition, and beauty of which excited the admiration of the Spanish conquerors. It was laid out in four squares, and planted with every variety of trees, the sight and scent of which gave infinite pleasure to the senses; through those squares a number of roads and paths led, some formed by fruit-bearing trees, and others by espaliers of flowering shrubs and aromatic herbs. Several canals from the lake watered it, by one of which their barges could enter. In the centre of the garden was a fish-pond, the circumference of which measured sixteen hundred paces, or four hundred from side to side, where innumerable water-fowl resorted, and there were steps on every side

to descend to the bottom. This garden, agreeably to the testimony of Cortes and Diaz, who saw it, was planted, or rather extended and improved by Cuitlahuatzin, the brother and successor in the kingdom to Montezuma II. He caused many foreign trees to be transplanted there, according to the account of Hernandez, who saw them.

The garden of Huaxtepec was still more extensive and celebrated than the last. It was six miles in circumference, and watered by a beautiful river which crossed it. Innumerable species of trees and plants were reared there and beautifully disposed, and at proper distances from each other different pleasure houses were erected. A great number of strange plants imported from foreign countries were collected in it. The Spaniards for many years preserved this garden, where they cultivated every kind of medicinal herb belonging to that clime, for the use of the hospital which they founded there, in which the remarkable hermit, Gregorio Lopez, served a number of years (*p*).

They paid no less attention to the preservation of the woods which supplied them with fuel to burn, timber to build, and game for the diversion of the king. We have  
formerly

(*p*) Cortes, in his letter to Charles V. of the 15th of May, 1522, told him, that the garden of Huaxtepec was the most extensive, the most beautiful, and most delightful which had ever been beheld. Bernal Dias, in chap. cxlii. of his history says, that the garden was most wonderful, and truly worthy of a great prince. Hernandez frequently makes mention of it in his Natural History, and named several plants which were transplanted there, and amongst others the balsam-tree. Cortes also, in his letter to Charles V. of the 30th of October, 1520, relates, that having requested king Montezuma to cause a villa to be made in Malinaltepec for that emperor, two months were hardly elapsed when there were erected at that place four good houses; sixty fanegas of maize sown, ten of French beans, two thousand feet of ground planted with cacao, and a vast pond, where five hundred ducks were breeding, and fifteen hundred turkies were rearing in houses.

formerly mentioned the woods of king Montezuma, and the laws of king Nezahualcojotl concerning the cutting of them. It would be of advantage to that kingdom, that those laws were still in force, or at least that there was not so much liberty granted in cutting without an obligation to plant a certain number of trees; as many people preferring their private interest and convenience to the public welfare, destroy the wood in order to enlarge their possessions (q).

Among the plants most cultivated by the Mexicans next to maize, the principal were those of cotton, the cacao, the *metl*, or aloe, the chia, and great pepper, on account of the various uses which they made of them. The aloe, or maguei alone, yielded almost every thing necessary to the life of the poor. Besides making excellent hedges for their fields, its trunk served in place of beams for the roofs of their houses, and its leaves instead of tiles. From those leaves they obtained paper, thread, needles, clothing, shoes, and stockings, and cordage; and from its copious juice they made wine, honey, sugar, and vinegar. Of the trunk, and thickest part of the leaves, when well baked, they made a very tolerable dish of food. Lastly, it was a powerful medicine in several disorders, and particularly in those of the urine. It is also at present one of the plants the most valued and most profitable to the Spaniards, as we shall see hereafter.

With respect to the breeding of animals, which is an employment associated with agriculture, although among the Mexicans there were no shepherds, they having been  
entirely

(q) Many places still feel the pernicious effects of the liberty to cut the woods. The city Queretaro was formerly provided with timber for building from the wood which was upon the neighbouring mountain *Cimatario*. At present it is obliged to be brought from a great distance, as the mountain is entirely stripped of its wood.



entirely destitute of sheep, they bred up innumerable species of animals unknown in Europe. Private persons brought up *techichis*, quadrupeds, as we have already mentioned, similar to little dogs; turkeys, quails, geese, ducks, and other kinds of fowl. In the houses of lords were bred fish, deer, rabbits, and a variety of birds; and in the royal palaces, almost all the species of quadrupeds, and winged animals of those countries, and a prodigious number of water animals and reptiles. We may say, that in this kind of magnificence Montezuma II. surpassed all the kings of the world, and that there never has been a nation equal in skill to the Mexicans in the care of so many different species of animals, which had so much knowledge of their dispositions, of the food which was most proper for each, and of all the means necessary for their preservation and increase.

Among the animals reared by the Mexicans, no one is more worthy of mention than the *nochiztli*, or Mexican cochineal, described by us in our first book. This insect, so greatly valued in Europe on account of its dyes, and especially those of scarlet and crimson, being not only extremely delicate, but also persecuted by several enemies, demands a great deal more care from the breeders than is necessary for the silk-worm. Rain, cold, and strong winds destroy it. Birds, mice, and worms, persecute it furiously and devour it; hence it is necessary to keep the rows of opuntia, or nopal, where those insects are bred always clean; to attend constantly to drive away the birds which are destructive to them, to make nests of hay for them in the leaves of the opuntia, by the juice of which they are nourished, and when the season of rain approaches, to raise them  
from

from the plants together with the leaves, and guard them in houses. Before the females are delivered they cast their skin, to obtain which spoil the breeders make use of the tail of the rabbit, brushing most gently with it that they may not detach the insects from the leaves, or do them any hurt. On every leaf they make three nests, and in every nest they lay about fifteen cochineals. Every year they make three gatherings, reserving however each time a certain number for the future generation; but the last gathering is least valued, the cochineals being smaller then, and mixed with the shavings of the opuntia. They kill the cochineal most commonly with hot water. On the manner of drying it afterwards, the quality of the colour which is obtained from it chiefly depends. The best is that which is dried in the sun. Some dry it in the *comalli*, or pan, in which they bake their bread of maize, and others in the *temazcalli*, a sort of oven, of which we shall speak elsewhere.

The Mexicans would not have been able to assemble so many sorts of animals, if they had not had great dexterity in the exercise of the chace. They made use of the bow and arrow, darts, nets, snares, and *Cerbottane*.\* The cerbottane which the kings and principal lords made use of were curiously carved and painted, and likewise adorned with gold and silver. Besides the exercise of the chace which private individuals took either for amusement, or to provide food for themselves, there were general chaces, which were either those established by custom to procure a plenty of victims for sacrifices, or others occasionally appointed by the king. For this general chace they fixed on a large wood, which was

\* *Cerbottane*, are long tubes, or pipes, through which they shoot, by blowing with the mouth little balls at birds, &c.

was generally that of Zacatepec, not far distant from the capital; there they chose the place most adapted for setting a great number of snares and nets. With some thousands of hunters they formed a circle round the wood of six, seven, eight, or more miles, according to the number of animals they intended to take: they set fire every where to the dry grass and herbs, and made a terrible noise with drums, horns, shouting, and whistling. The animals, alarmed by the noise and the fire, fled to the centre of the wood, which was the very place where the snares were set. The hunters approached towards the same spot, and still continuing their noise, gradually contracted their circle, until they left but a very small space to the game, which they all then attacked with their arms. Some of the animals were killed, and some were taken alive in the snares, or in the hands of the hunters. The number and variety of game which they took was so great, that the first viceroy of Mexico, when he was told of it, thought it so incredible, that he desired to make experience of the method himself. For the field of the chase, he made choice of a great plain which lies in the country of the Otomies, between the villages of Xilotepec and *S. Giovanni del Rio*, and ordered the Indians to proceed in the same manner as they had been used to do in the time of their paganism. The viceroy, with a great retinue of Spaniards repaired to the plain, where accommodations were prepared for them in houses built of wood, erected there on purpose. Eleven thousand Otomies formed a circle of more than fifteen miles, and after practising all the means above mentioned, assembled such a quantity of game on the plain, that the viceroy, who was quite astonished at the sight, commanded that the greater part



of them should be set at liberty, which was accordingly done; notwithstanding the number of animals taken would be altogether incredible, if the circumstance had not been publicly known and attested by many, and among others by a witness worthy of the highest credit (r). They killed more than six hundred deer and wild goats, upward of a hundred cojotés, and a surprising number of hares, rabbits, and other quadrupeds. The plain still retains the Spanish name *Cazadero*, or place of the chase, which was then given it.

Besides the usual method of practising the chase, they had other particular devices for catching particular kinds of animals. In order to catch young apes, they made a small fire in the woods, and put among the burning coals a particular kind of stone which they called *Cacalotell*, (raven, or black stone), which bursts with a loud noise when it is well heated. They covered the fire with earth, and sprinkled around it a little maize. The apes, allured by the grain, assembled about it with their young, and while they were peaceably eating, the stone burst; the old apes fled away in terror leaving their young behind them; the hunters, who were on the watch, then seized them before their dams could return to carry them off.

The method also which they had, and still use, to catch ducks, is artful and curious. The lakes of the Mexican vale, as well as others of the kingdom, are frequented by a prodigious multitude of ducks, geese, and other aquatic birds. The Mexicans left some empty gourds to float upon the water, where those birds resorted, that they might be accustomed to see and approach them without fear. The bird-catcher went into the water so deep as to hide his body, and covered his head  
with

(r) P. Toribio di Benaventi, or Motolinia.

with a gourd ; the ducks came to peck at it, and then he pulled them by the feet under water, and in this manner secured as many as he pleased.

They took serpents alive either by twisting them with great dexterity, or approaching them intrepidly, they seized them with one hand by the neck, and sewed up their mouths with the other. They still take them in this way, and every day in the apothecaries shops of the capital, and other cities, may be seen live serpents which have been taken in this manner.

But nothing is more wonderful than their quickness in tracing the steps of wild beasts. Although there is not the smallest print of them to be seen from the earth being covered with herbs or dry leaves which fall from the trees, they still track them, particularly if they are wounded, by observing most attentively sometimes the drops of blood which fall upon the leaves as they pass, sometimes the herbs which are broken or beat down by their feet (*s*).

From the situation of their capital, and its vicinity to the lake of Chalco, which abounded with fish, the Mexicans were still more invited to fishing than the chace. They employed themselves in it from the time of their arrival in that country, and their art in fishing procured them all other necessaries. The instruments which they most commonly made use of in fishing were nets, but they also employed hooks, harpoons, and weals.

The fishers not only caught fish, but even took crocodiles in two different methods. One was by tying them  
by

(*s*) The account which we have of the Teraumarese, the Opates, and other nations beyond the Tropic, when pursued by their enemies the Apacci, is still more wonderful ; for by the touch and observations of the footsteps of their enemies, they can tell the time at which they passed there. The same thing we understand is reported of the people of Yucatan.

by the neck, which, as Hernandez asserts, was very common; but this author does not explain the manner in which they performed an act so daring against so terrible a creature. The other method, which is still used by some, was that which the Egyptians formerly practised on the famous crocodiles of the Nile. The fisher presented himself before the crocodile, carrying in his hand a strong stick, well sharpened at both ends, and when the animal opened its mouth to devour him, he thrust his armed hand into its jaws, and as the crocodile shut its mouth again, it was transfixed by the two points of the stick. The fisher waited until it grew feeble from the loss of blood, and then he killed it.

Fishing, hunting, agriculture, and the arts, furnished the Mexicans several branches of commerce. Their commerce in the country of Anahuac began as soon as they were settled upon the little islands in the Tezcucan lake. The fish which they caught, and the mats which they wove of rushes which the same lake produces, was exchanged for maize, cotton, stones, lime, and the wood, which they required for their support, for their clothing, and their buildings. In proportion to the power which their arms acquired, their commerce increased; so that from having been at first confined to the environs of their own city, it extended at last to the most distant provinces. There were innumerable Mexican merchants, who incessantly travelled from one city to another to exchange their goods to advantage. In every place of the Mexican empire, and of all the extensive country of Anahuac, a market was opened every day; but every five days they held one which was more considerable and general. Cities which were near together had this market on different days, that they might not prejudice each other; but



but in the capital it was kept on the days of the House, the Rabbit, the Reed, and the Flint, which, in the first year of the century, were the third, the eighth, the thirteenth, and eighteenth of every month.

In order to convey some idea of those markets, or rather fairs, which have been so much celebrated by the historians of Mexico, it will be sufficient to describe that held in the capital. Until the time of king Axajacatl, it was kept in a space of ground before the royal palace; but after the conquest of Tlatelolco, it was removed to that quarter. The public place of Tlatelolco was, according to the account of the conqueror Cortes, twice as large as that of Salamanca, one of the most famous in Spain (*t*), and surrounded by porticos for the convenience of the merchants. Every sort of merchandize had a particular place allotted to it by the judges of commerce. In one station were goods of gold, and silver, and jewels; in another, manufactures of cotton; in another, those of feathers, and so forth; and no change of situation was allowed to any of them; but although the square was very large, as all the merchandizes could not be lodged in it without interrupting the transaction of business, it was ordered that all large goods, such as beams, stones, &c. should be left in the roads and canals near to the market-place. The number of merchants who daily assembled there, according to the affirmation of Cortes himself, exceeded fifty thousand (*u*). The things which

were

(*t*) In three editions of the letters of Cortes which we have seen, we have read, that the square of Tlatelolco *was twice as large as the city of Salamanca*, whereas it ought to read, *as that* of the city of Salamanca.

(*u*) Although Cortes affirmed that there assembled daily in the market-place of Tlatelolco fifty thousand people, it appears that it ought to be understood of the great market which was held every five days; for the anonymous conqueror, who speaks more distinctly of it, says, that at the markets there were from twenty to twenty-five thousand, but at the great markets from forty to fifty thousand.

were sold or exchanged there, were so numerous and so various, that historians who saw them, after making a long and tedious enumeration, conclude with saying, it is impossible to express them all. Without contradicting their assertion, and to avoid prolixity, we will endeavour to comprehend them in a few words. To that square were carried to be sold or exchanged all the productions of the Mexican empire, or adjacent countries, which could serve for the necessities of life, the convenience, the luxuries, the vanity, or curiosity of man ( $\kappa$ ); innumerable species of animals, both dead and alive, every sort of eatable which was in use amongst them, all the metals and gems which were known to them, all the medicinal drugs and simples, herbs, gums, resins, and mineral earths, as well as the medicines prepared by their physicians, such as beverages, electuaries, oils, plasters, ointments, &c. and every sort of manufacture and work of the thread of the metl, maguei, or aloe, of the mountain palm, of cotton, of feathers, of the hair of animals, of wood, of stone, of gold, silver, and copper. They sold there also slaves, and even whole vessels, laden with human dung, for dressing the skins of animals. In short, they sold in that square every thing which could be sold in all that city; for they had no mart elsewhere, nor was any thing sold out of the market-place except eatables. The potters and jewellers of Cholula, the goldsmiths of Azcapotzalco, the painters of Tezcuco, the stone-cutters of Tenajocan, the hunters of Xilotepec, the fishers of Cuitlahuac, the fruiterers of hot countries, the mat-weavers and chair-makers

( $\kappa$ ) Whoever will take the trouble to read the description which Cortes, Bernal Dias, and the anonymous conqueror have given of their market, will be convinced there is no exaggeration made here of the variety of their merchandizes.

chair-makers of Quauhtitlan, the florists of Xochimilco, all assembled there.

Their commerce was not only carried on by way of exchange, as many authors report, but likewise by means of real purchase and sale. They have five kinds of real money, though it was not coined, which served them as a price to purchase whatever they wanted. The first was a certain species of cacao, different from that which they used in their daily drink, which was in constant circulation through the hands of traders, as our money is amongst us. They counted the cacao by *Xiquipilli*, (this as we have before observed, was equal to eight thousand), and to save the trouble of counting them when the merchandize was of great value, they reckoned them by sacks, every sack having been reckoned to contain three *xiquipilli*, or twenty-four thousand nuts. The second kind of money was certain small cloths of cotton, which they called *patolquachtli*, as being solely destined for the purchase of merchandizes which were immediately necessary. The third species of money was gold in dust, contained in goose-quills, which by being transparent, shewed the precious metal which filled them, and in proportion to their size were of greater or less value. The fourth which most resembled coined money, was made of pieces of copper in the form of a T, and was employed in purchases of little value. The fifth, of which mention is made by Cortes, in his last letter to the emperor Charles the Vth, consisted of thin pieces of tin.

They sold and exchanged merchandizes by number and measure; but we do not know that they made use of weights, either because they thought them liable to frauds, as some authors have said, or because they did  
not



not find them necessary, as others have affirmed, or because if they did use them the Spaniards never knew it (y).

To prevent fraudulent contracts and disorder amongst the traders, there were certain commissioners who were continually traversing the market to observe what happened, and a tribunal of commerce, composed of twelve judges, residing in a house of the square, was appointed to decide all disputes between traders, and take cognizance of all trespasses committed in the market-place. Of all the goods which were brought into the market, a certain portion was paid in tribute to the king, who was on his part obliged to do justice to the merchants, and to protect their property and their persons. A theft seldom happened in the market, on account of the vigilance of the king's officers, and the severity with which it was instantly punished. But it is not the least surprising, that theft was so rigorously punished, where the smallest disorders were never pardoned. The laborious and most sincere F. Motolinia relates, that a quarrel having arisen once between two women in the market of Tezcucó, and one of them having gone so far as to beat the other with her hands, and occasion the loss of some blood, to the amazement of the people, who were not accustomed to see such an outrage committed there, she was immediately condemned to death for the offence. All the Spaniards who saw those markets extolled

(y) Gomara believed, that the Mexicans made no use of scales or weights; because they were ignorant of such a contrivance; but it is very improbable, that a nation so industrious and commercial should not have known the manner of ascertaining the weight of goods, when among other nations of America, less acute than the Mexicans, stilliards were made use of, according to the report of the same author, to weigh gold. Of how many circumstances relative to American antiquity are we still ignorant, owing to the want of proper examination and enquiry!

toll'd them with the highest praises, and were unable to express in words the admirable disposition, and the wonderful order which was maintained among so great a multitude of merchants and merchandizes.

The markets of Tezcucó, Tlascala, Cholula, Huexotzinco, and other large places, were ordered in the same manner as that of Mexico. At the market of Tlascala, Cortes affirms, more than thirty thousand merchants and others assembled (z). At that of Tepeyacac, which was not one of the largest cities, Motolinia above mentioned says, he has known twenty-four years after the conquest, when the commerce of those people was greatly declined, that at the market held every five days, there were not less than eight thousand European hens fold, and that as many were fold at the market of Acatitlayocan.

When young merchants were desirous of undertaking a long journey, they gave an entertainment to the old merchants, who were no longer able on account of their age to travel, and also to their own relations, and informed them of their design, and the motive which induced them to travel into distant countries.

Those who were invited praised their resolution, encouraged them to follow the steps of their ancestors, particularly if it was their first journey which they were going to perform, and gave several advices to them how they were to conduct themselves. In general, many of them travelled together for greater safety. Each of them carried in his hand a smooth black stick, which, as they said, was the image of their god Jacateuctli, with

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which

(z) That which Cortes has said respecting the number of merchants and dealers which assembled at the market of Tlascala, ought most probably to be understood of the market of every five days, in the same manner as we have observed above respecting that of Mexico.

which they imagined themselves secure against all the dangers of the journey. As soon as they arrived at any house where they made a halt, they assembled and tied all the sticks together and worshipped them; and twice or thrice, during the night, they drew blood from themselves in honour of that god. All the time that a merchant was absent from home, his wife and children did not wash their heads, although they bathed, excepting once every eighty days, not only to testify their regret of his absence, but also by that species of mortification to procure the protection of their gods. When any of the merchants died on their journey, advice of his death was immediately sent to the oldest merchants of his native country, and they communicated it to his relations and kindred, who immediately formed an imperfect statue of wood to represent the deceased, to which they paid all the funeral honours which they would have done to the real dead body.

For the convenience of merchants, and other travellers, there were public roads, which were repaired every year after the rainy season. They had likewise in the mountains and uninhabited places, houses erected for the reception of travellers, and bridges, and other vessels for passing rivers. Their vessels were oblong and flat-bottomed, without keel, masts, or sails, or any other thing to guide them but oars. They were of various sizes. The smallest could hardly hold two or three people, the largest could carry upwards of thirty. Many of them were made of one single trunk of a tree. The number of those who were continually traversing the Mexican lake, exceeded, according to the account of ancient historians fifty thousand. Besides the vessels, or flats, they made use of a particular machine to pass rivers, which  
was



was called *valsa*, by the Spaniards of America. This is a square platform, of about five feet, composed of *otatli*, or solid canes, tied firmly upon large, hard, empty gourds. Four, or six passengers seated themselves upon this machine, and were conducted from one side of a river to the other by two or four swimmers, who laid hold of one corner of the machine with one of their hands, and swam with the other. This sort of machine is still used on some rivers distant from the capital, and we ourselves passed a large river on one of them in 1739. It is perfectly safe where the current of the water is equal and smooth, but dangerous in rapid and impetuous rivers.

Their bridges were built either of stone or wood, but those of stone we are of opinion were extremely few in number. The most singular kind of bridge was that to which the Spaniards gave the name of *Hamaca*. This was a number of the ropes, or natural ligatures of a tree, more pliant than the willow, but thicker and stronger, called in America *Bejucos*, twisted and woven together, the extremities of which were tied to the trees on each side of rivers, the tress or net formed by them remaining suspended in the air in the manner of a swing (*a*). There are some rivers with such bridges still. The Spaniards durst not pass them, but the Indians pass them with as much confidence and intrepidity as if they were crossing by a stone bridge, perfectly regardless of the undulatory motion of the hamaca, or the depth of the river. But it is to be observed, that the ancient Mexicans having been excellent swimmers, had

(*a*) Some bridges are so tight drawn that they have no undulatory motion, and all of them have their side support made of the same parts of the tree.

had no need of bridges, unless where from the rapidity of the current, or the weight of some burden, they could not swim across.

The Mexican historians tell us nothing of the maritime commerce of the Mexicans. It is probable that it was very trifling, and that their vessels, which were seen coasting on both seas, were chiefly those of fishermen. Their greatest traffick by water was carried on in the lake of Mexico. All the stone and wood for building, and for fire, the fish, the greater part of the maize, the pulse, fruit, flowers, &c. was brought by water. The commerce of the capital with Tezcuco, Xochimilco, Chalco, Cuiclahuac, and other cities situated upon the lake, was carried on by water, and occasioned that wonderful number of vessels to be employed which we have already mentioned.

Whatever was not transported by water was carried upon men's backs, and on that account there were numbers of men who carried burdens, called *Tlamama* or *Tlameme*. They were brought up from childhood to this business, which they continued all their lives. A regular load was about sixty pounds, and the length of way they daily walked was fifteen miles; but they made also journies of two hundred and three hundred miles, travelling frequently over rocky and steep mountains. They were subjected to this intolerable fatigue from the want of beasts of burden; and even at present, although those countries abound in animals of this sort, the Mexicans are still often seen making long journeys with burdens upon their backs. They carried cotton, maize, and other things in *petlacalli*, which were baskets made of a particular kind of cane, and covered with leather, which were light and defended their goods sufficiently from

from the rain or the sun. These baskets are still a good deal used for journeys by the Spaniards, who corrupt their name into *petacas*.

The commerce of the Mexicans was by no means embarrassed, either by the multitude or variety of languages which were spoken in those countries; for the Mexican tongue which was the most prevailing, was understood and spoken every where. It was the proper and natural language of the Acolhuas and the Aztecas (*b*), and as we have observed elsewhere, likewise of the Chechemecan and Toltecán nations.

The Mexican language, of which we wish to give our readers some idea, is entirely destitute of the consonants B, D, F, G, R, and S, and abounds with L, X, T, Z, Tl, Tz; but although the letter L is so familiar to this language, there is not a single word in it beginning with that consonant. Nor is there a word of an acute termination, except some vocatives. Almost all the words have the penult syllable long. Its aspirates are moderate and soft, and there never is occasion to make the least nasal sound in pronunciation.

Notwithstanding the want of those six consonants it is a most copious language; tolerably polished, and remarkably expressive; on which account it has been highly valued and praised by all Europeans who have learned it, so as to be esteemed by many superior to the Latin,

(*b*) Boturini says, that the excellence of the language which we call the *Mexican*, was the reason of its being adopted by the Chechemecan, the Mexican, and Teochechemecan nations, and of their relinquishing their native tongue; but besides this opinion being different from that of all other writers, and of the Indians themselves, there are no traces in history of the event of such a change. Where has there ever been a nation known to abandon its native idiom to adopt a better, and particularly a nation so tenacious as the Mexicans, and all the other nations of those countries of their particular language?



tin, and even to the Greek (*c*); but although we know the particular excellencies of the Mexican language, we can never dare to compare it with the last.

Of the copiousness of this language we have an exceeding good demonstration in the Natural History of Hernandez; for in describing twelve hundred plants of the country of Anahuac, two hundred and more species of birds, and a large number of quadrupeds, reptiles, insects, and minerals, he hardly found a single animal, herb, or substance, without its distinct and proper appellation. But it is not the least surprising, that it abounds in words which signify material objects, when there are hardly any wanting of those which are necessary to express spiritual ideas. The highest mysteries of our religion can be well expressed in Mexican, without any necessity of introducing foreign terms. Acosta wonders, that the Mexicans who had an idea of a supreme Being, creator of heaven and earth, had not also in their language a word to express it equivalent to *Dios* of the Spaniards, *Deus* of the Romans, *Theos* of the Grecians, *El* of the Hebrews, and *Ala* of the Arabs: on which account their preachers were obliged to make use of the Spanish term *Dios*. But if this author had had any knowledge of the Mexican language, he would have known that the *Teotl* of the Mexicans signifies the same thing as the *Theos* of the Greeks, and that there was no other reason for introducing the Spanish word *Dios*, but the excessive scruples of the first missionaries, who, as they burned the historical paintings of the Mexicans, because they suspected them to be full of superstitious meanings (of which also Acosta himself justly complains), likewise

(*c*) Among the admirers of the Mexican language there have been some Frenchmen and Flemings, and many Germans, Italians, and Spaniards.

wife rejected the Mexican word *Teotl*, because it had been used to express the false gods whom they worshipped. But it would have been better to have imitated the example of St. Paul, who, when he found that in Greece the name *Theos* was used to signify certain false deities, more abominable still than those of the Mexicans, did not compel the Greeks to adopt the *El*, or *Adonai*, of the Hebrews, but retained the use of the Greek term, making it be understood from that time, to signify a supreme, eternal, and infinitely perfect Being. However, many discerning men who have written in the Mexican language, have not scrupled to make use of the name *Teotl*, in the same manner as they all make use of the *Ipalnemoani*, of the *Tloque Nabuaque*, and other names significative of the supreme being, which the Mexicans applied to their invisible God. In one of our Dissertations we shall give a list of the authors who have written in the Mexican language on the Christian religion and morality, and also a list of terms, signifying metaphysical and moral ideas, in order to expose the ignorance and weakness of an author (*d*) who has had absurdity enough to publish that the Mexicans had no words to count above the number three, or to express any metaphysical or moral ideas, and that on account of its harshness no Spaniard had ever learned to pronounce it. We could here give the numeral words of this language, by which the Mexicans could count up to forty-eight millions at least, and could shew how common this language was among the Spaniards, and how well those who have written in it have understood it.

The

(*d*) The author of the work entitled, *Recherches Philosophiques sur les Américains*.

The Mexican language, like the Hebrew and French, wants the superlative term, and like the Hebrew, and most of the living languages of Europe, the comparative term, which are supplied by certain particles equivalent to those which are used in other such languages. It abounds more than the Tuscan in diminutives and augmentatives, and more than the English or any other language we know in verbal and abstract terms; for there is hardly a verb from which there are not many verbals formed, and scarcely a substantive or adjective from which there are not some abstracts formed. It is not less copious in verbs than in nouns; as from every single verb others are derived of different significations. *Chibua*, is *to do*, *Chichibua*, *to do with diligence*, or *often*; *Chibuilia*, *to do to another*; *Chibualtia*, *to cause to be done*; *Chibuatiuh*, *to go to do*; *Chihuaco*, *to come to do*; *Chiuhtiuh*, *to be doing*, &c. We could say a great deal more on the subject, if it was permitted in the rules of history.

The style of address in Mexican varies according to the rank of the persons, with whom, or about whom, conversation is held, adding to the nouns, verbs, prepositions, and adverbs, certain particles expressive of respect: *Tatli*, means *father*; *Amota*, *your father*; *Amotatzin*, *your worthy father*. *Tleco*, is *to ascend*; if a person commands his servant to ascend a certain place, he says simply *Xitleco*; but if he asks some respectable person to do so, he will say *Ximotlicahui*; and if he wishes to use still more ceremony and respect *Maximotlicahuitzino*. This variety, which gives so much civilization to the language, does not, however, make it difficult to be spoken; because it is subjected to rules which are fixed  
and



and easy ; nor do we know any language that is more regular and methodical.

The Mexicans, like the Greeks and other nations, have the advantage of making compounds of two, three, or four simple words ; but they do it with more œconomy than the Greeks did ; for the Greeks made use of the entire words in composition, whereas the Mexicans cut off syllables, or at least some letters from them. *Tlazotli*, signifies *valued* or *loved* ; *Mahuitztic*, *honoured* or *revered* ; *Tespixqui*, *priest* ; a word itself too composed of *Teotl*, *god* ; and the verb *Pia*, which signifies *to hold, guard, or keep* ; *Tatli* is *father*, as we have already said. To unite those five words in one, they take away eight consonants and four vowels, and say for instance *Notlazomahuitzteopixcatalzin*, that is, *my very worthy father, or revered priest* ; prefixing the *no*, which corresponds to the pronoun *my*, and adding *tzin*, which is a particle expressive of *reverence*. A word of this kind is extremely common with the Indians when they address, and particularly when they confess themselves, which although it is complex, is not, however, one of the longest ; for there are some compounded of so many terms as to have fifteen or sixteen syllables.

Such compounds were made use of in order to give the definition, or description, of a thing, whatever it was, in one word. This may be discovered in the names of animals and plants, which are to be found in the Natural History of Hernandez, and in the names of places which occur frequently in this history. Almost all the names which they gave to places of the Mexican empire are compounds, and signify the situation or properties of the places, and that some memorable action happened there. Many of their expressions are so

strong, that the ideas of them cannot be heightened, particularly on the subject of love. In short, all those who have learned this language, and can judge of its copiousness, regularity, and beautiful modes of speech, are of opinion, that such a language cannot have been spoken by a barbarous people.

A nation possessed of so powerful a language, could not want poets and orators. Those two arts were much exercised by the Mexicans, although they were very far from knowing all their excellencies. Those who were destined to be orators, were instructed from their infancy in speaking properly, and learned to repeat by memory the most celebrated orations of their ancestors that had been handed down from father to son. Their eloquence was employed principally in delivering embassies, in councils, and congratulatory addresses, which they made to new kings. Although their most celebrated speakers are not to be compared with the orators of the polished nations of Europe, it is not to be denied that their discourses were sound, judicious, and elegant, as may be perceived from those specimens of their eloquence which are still extant. Even at present, when they are reduced to a state of great humiliation, and retain not their ancient institutions, they make harangues in their assemblies, which are so full of good sense and propriety, as to excite the admiration of all those who hear them.

The number of their public speakers was exceeded by that of their poets. In their verses they were attentive to the cadence and measure. Among the remains which we have of their poetry, are some verses in which between words that are significative, interjections, or syllables, are interposed, devoid of any meaning, and  
only

only made use of by what appears to adjust the measure; but this practice was, probably, only a vice of their bad poets. The language of their poetry was brilliant, pure, and agreeable, figurative, and embellished with frequent comparisons to the most pleasing objects in nature, such as flowers, trees, rivers, &c. It was in poetry chiefly where they made use of words in composition, which became often so very long, that a single one made a verse of the longest measure.

The subject of their poetical compositions was various. They composed hymns in praise of their gods, to obtain from them those favours they stood in need of, which were sung in the temples and at their sacred dances. Some were historical poems, reciting the events of the nation and the glorious actions of their heroes, which were sung at profane dances. Some were odes, containing some moral or lesson useful in the conduct of life. Lastly, some were poems on love, or some other pleasing subject, such as the chase, which were sung at the public rejoicings of the seventh month. The priests were the chief composers of those pieces, and taught them to young boys, that they might sing them when they were grown up. We have already mentioned the celebrated compositions of king Nezahualcojotl. The esteem in which poetry was held by that king, excited his subjects to cultivate that art, and multiplied the number of poets of his court. It is related of one of those poets, that having been condemned to die for some crime, he made a composition in prison, in which he took leave of the world in so tender and pathetic manner, that the musicians of the palace, who were his friends, advised him to sing it to the king; the king heard it, and was so much affected, that he granted the culprit a pardon.

This



This was a singular event in the history of Acolhuacan, in which we read in general, examples of the greatest severity of government. We should be happy, if it were in our power, to produce here some fragments which we have seen of the poetry of those nations, to satisfy the curious among our readers (*e*).

Dramatic, as well as lyric poetry, was greatly in repute among the Mexicans. Their theatre, on which those kinds of compositions were represented, was a square terras uncovered, raised in the market-place, or the lower area of some temple, and suitably high, that the actors might be seen and heard by all. That which was constructed in the market-place of Tlatelolco, was made of stone and lime, and, agreeably to what Cortes affirms, thirteen feet high, and thirty paces in length every way.

Cav. Boturini says, that the Mexican comedies were excellent, and that among the antiques which he had in his curious museum, were two dramatic compositions on the celebrated apparitions of the mother of God to the Mexican Neophyte Gio. Didaco, in which a particular delicacy and harmony in the expressions was discernible. We have never seen any composition of this nature, and although we do not doubt of the delicacies of the language of them, we cannot readily believe that their comedies were much according to the rules of the drama, or deserving of the excessive praise of that annalist. The description which Acosta has left us of their theatre and representations, in which he mentions those which were made at Cholula at the great festival of the god *Quetzalcoatl*,

(*e*) P. Orazio Carocci, a learned Milanese Jesuit; published some elegant verses of the ancient Mexicans, in his admirable grammar of the Mexican language, printed in Mexico about the middle of the last century.

*Quetzalcoatl*, is much more worthy of credit, and more consistent with the character of those nations: "There was," he says, "in the area of the temple of this god a small theatre, thirty feet square, curiously whitened, which they adorned with boughs, and fitted up with the utmost neatness, surrounding it with arches made of flowers and feathers, from which were suspended many birds, rabbits, and other pleasing objects; where, after having dined, the whole of the people assembled, the actors appeared, and exhibited burlesque characters, feigning themselves deaf, sick with colds, lame, blind, crippled, and addressing the idol for a return of health: the deaf people answering at cross purposes, those who had colds, coughing, and spitting, and the lame halting; all recited their complaints and misfortunes, which produced infinite mirth among the audience. Others appeared under the names of different little animals, some in the disguise of beetles, some like toads, some like lizards, and upon encountering each other, reciprocally explained their employments, which was highly satisfactory to the people, as they performed their parts with infinite ingenuity. Several little boys also belonging to the temple, appeared in the disguise of butterflies, and birds of various colours, and mounting upon the trees which were fixed there on purpose; the priests threw little balls of earth at them with slings, occasioning incidents of much humour and entertainment to the spectators. All the spectators then made a grand dance which terminated the festival. This took place at their principal festivals only (*f*). The description which Acoſta here gives, calls to

to our recollection the first scenes among the Greeks, and we doubt not, that if the Mexican empire had endured a century or two longer, their theatre would have been reduced to a better form, as the Grecian theatre improved itself but slowly and by degrees.

The first religious missionaries who announced the gospel to those nations, observing their attachment to music and poetry, and the superstitious notions which characterised all their native compositions as pagans, composed many songs and odes in the Mexican language in praise of the true God. The laborious Franciscan, Bernardino Sahagun, composed in pure and elegant Mexican, and printed at Mexico, three hundred and sixty-five hymns, one for each day of the year (g), and the Indians themselves composed many others in praise of the true God.

Boturini makes mention of the compositions of D. Francisco Placido, governor of Azcapozalco, sung by him at the sacred dances, which he, along with other Mexican nobles, made before the famous image of the Virgin of Guadalupe. Those zealous Franciscans wrote also several dramatic pieces in Mexican, relative to the mysteries of the Christian religion. Amongst others was celebrated that of the universal judgment, composed by the indefatigable missionary Andrea d' Olmos, which was represented in the church of Tlatelolco, in the presence of the first governor, and the first archbishop of Mexico, and a great assembly of the Mexican nobility and people.

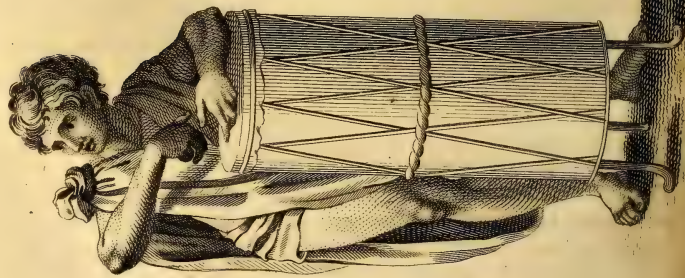
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(g) Sahagun's work was printed, according to the best of our knowledge, in 1540. Dr. Eguiera complains in his *Biblioteca Mexicana*, that he was never able to find one copy of it. We saw one in a library of the college of St. Francisco Saverio of the Jesuits of Angelopoli.

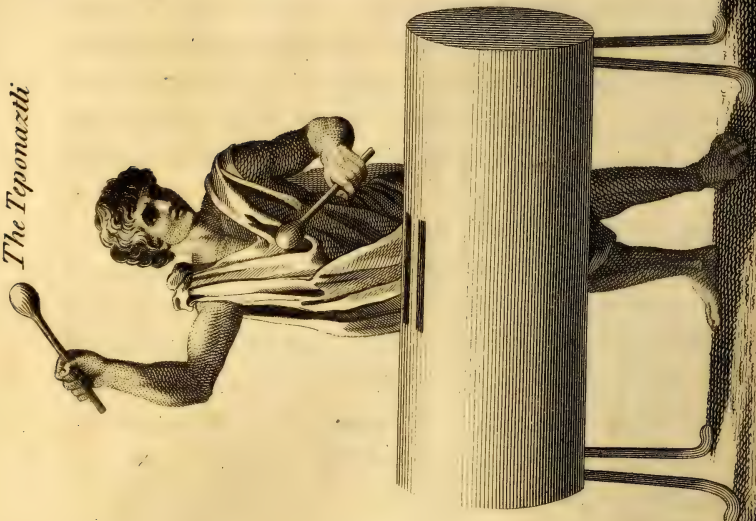




*The Huchhucl*



*The Teponaxtli*



*The Ajacaxtli*



Their music was still more imperfect than their poetry. They had no stringed instruments. All their music consisted in the *Huebuetl*, the *Teponaztli*, horns, sea-shells, and little flutes or pipes, which made a shrill sound. The *Huebuetl*, or Mexican drum, was a cylinder of wood, more than three feet high, curiously carved and painted on the outside, covered above with the skin of a deer, well dressed and stretched, which they tightened or slackened occasionally, to make the sound more sharp or deep. They struck it only with their fingers, but it required infinite dexterity in the striker. The *Teponaztli*, which is used to this day among the Indians, is also cylindrical and hollow, but all of wood, having no skin about it, nor any opening but two slits lengthways in the middle, parallel to, and at a little distance from each other. It is sounded by beating the space between those two slits with two little sticks, similar to those which are made use of for modern drums, only that their points are covered with ule, or elastic gum, to soften the sound. The size of this instrument is various ; some are so small as to be hung about the neck ; some of a middling size, and others so large as to be upwards of five feet long. The sound which they yield is melancholy, and that of the largest is so loud, that it may be heard at the distance of two or three miles. To the accompaniment of those instruments, the figure of which we here present to our readers, the Mexicans sung their hymns and sacred music. Their singing was harsh and offensive to European ears ; but they took so much pleasure in it themselves, that on festivals, they continued singing the whole day. This was unquestionably the art in which the Mexicans were least successful.

How-

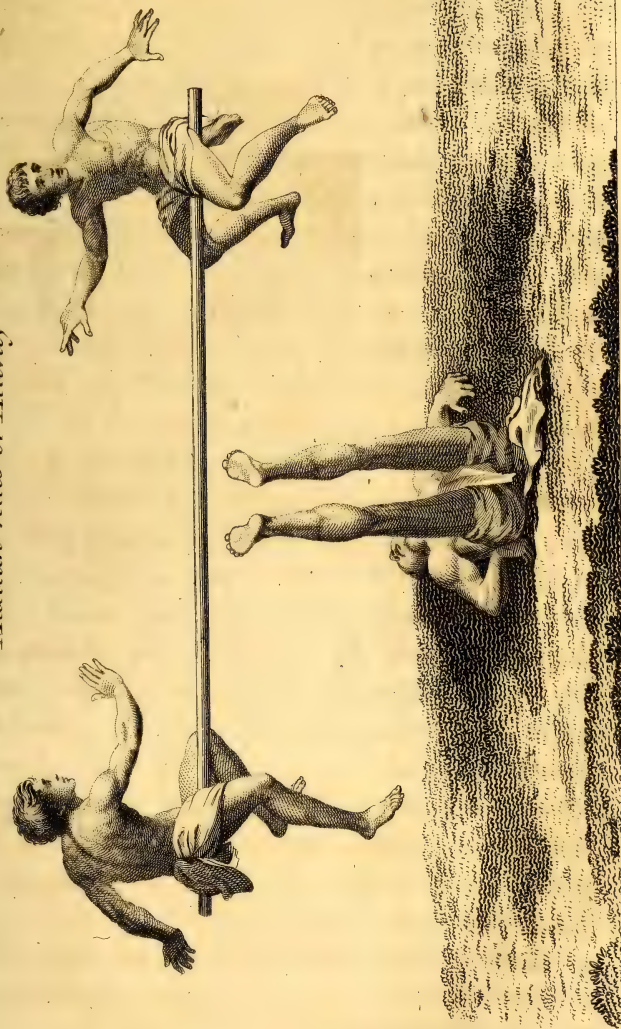


However imperfect they were in music, their dances in which they exercised themselves from childhood, under the direction of the priests, were most graceful. They were of various kinds, and were differently named, according to the nature of the dance, or the circumstances of the festival on which they were made. They danced sometimes in a circle, and sometimes in ranks. At some dances only men, and at others, only women danced. On such occasions, the nobles put on their most pompous dresses, adorned themselves with bracelets, earrings, and various pendants of gold, jewels, and fine feathers, and carried in one hand a shield covered with the most beautiful plumes, or a fan made of feathers; and in the other an *Ajacaxtli*, which is a certain little vessel, which we shall mention hereafter, resembling a helmet, round or oval in shape, having many little holes, and containing a number of little stones which they shook together, accompanying the sound, which is not disagreeable, with their musical instruments. The populace disguised themselves, under various figures of animals, in dresses made of paper, or feathers, or skins.

The little dance, which was made in the palaces for the amusement of the lords, or in the temples, as a particular act of devotion, or in private houses, when they celebrated nuptials, or made any other domestic rejoicing, consisted of but a few dancers, who formed themselves in two parallel lines, dancing sometimes with their faces turned to the one, sometimes towards the other extremity of their lines; sometimes the person of one line faced those correspondent to them in the other, each line occasionally crossing and intermingling with the other, and sometimes one of each line detaching themselves from the rest, danced in the space between both, while the others stood still.

The

*Mexican feats of Activity*

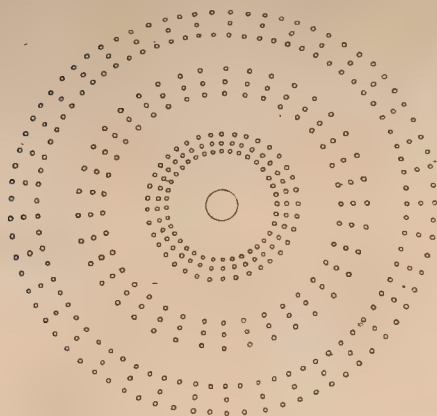
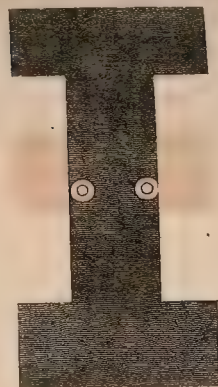
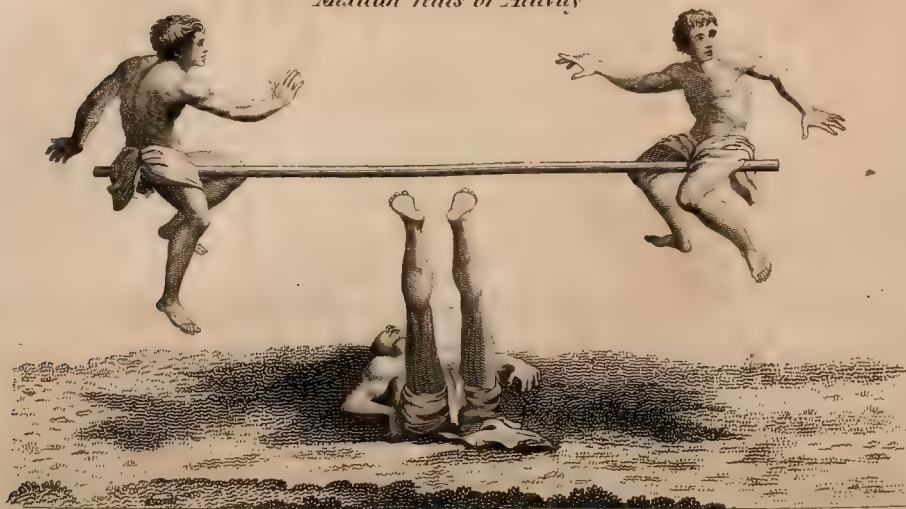


*Lawson R.*

*Engraved by E. Brown.*





*Figure of the Great Dance**Plan of the Ground for the Game of Football**Mexican feats of Activity*



The great dance, which was made in large open spaces of ground, or in the area of the greater temple, differed from the other in the order, form, and number of the dancers. This dance was so numerous that some hundreds of people used to join in it. The music was placed in the middle of the area or space; near to it the lords danced, forming two, three, or more circles, according to the number of them present. At a little distance from them were formed other circles of dancers of less rank; and, at a small interval from them, other circles proportionably larger were formed, which were composed of youths. All these circles had for their centre the *Huehuetl* and the *Teponaztli*. The design which we have given of the order and disposition of this dance, represents it in the form of a wheel, in which the points denote the dancers, and the circles shew the figure which they described in their dance. The radii of the wheel are as many in number as there were dancers in the smallest circle nearest to the music. All the dancers described a circle in their dancing, and no person departed from the radius or line to which he belonged. Those who danced close to the music, moved with slowness and gravity, as the circle which they had to make was smaller, and on that account it was the place of the lords and nobles most advanced in age; but those who occupied the station most distant from the music, moved with the utmost velocity, that they might neither lose the direction of the line to which they belonged, nor the measure in which the lords danced.

Their dances were almost always accompanied with singing; but the singing was like all the movements of the dancers, adjusted by the beating of the instruments. Two persons sung a verse, to which all the rest an-



swered. In general the music began with a grave tone, and the singers in a low voice. The longer the dance continued, the more cheerful tone was founded by the music, the singers raised their voices, their movements became swifter, and the subject of their song more joyful. In the space between the different lines of dancers, some buffoons danced, who counterfeited the dress of other nations, or disguised themselves like wild beasts and other animals, exciting the mirth of the people with their buffooneries. When one set of dancers was wearied, another was introduced, and thus they continued the dance for six, and sometimes eight hours.

This was the form of their ordinary dance; but they had others that were very different, in which they represented either some mystery of their religion, some event of history or war, the chase, or agriculture.

Not only the lords, the priests, and the youth of the colleges danced, but likewise the kings in the temple in performance of their devotion, or for their amusement in the palaces; but on such occasions they had always a distinct place for themselves in respect to their character.

Among others there was one extremely curious dance which is still kept up by the people of Yucatan. They fixed in the earth a tree, or strong post, fifteen or twenty feet high, from the top of which, according to the number of dancers, they suspended twenty or more small cords, all long and of different colours. When each dancer had taken hold of the end of his cord, they all began to dance to the sound of musical instruments, crossing each other with great dexterity until they formed a beautiful net-work of the cords round the tree, on which the colours appeared chequered in admirable order.

Whenever

Whenever the cords, on account of the twisting, became so short, that the dancers could hardly keep hold of them with their arms raised up, by crossing each other again, they undid and unwound them from the tree. There is likewise practised by all the Indians of Mexico an ancient dance commonly called *Tocotin*, which is so graceful, decent, and solemn, that it has become one of the sacred dances performed on certain festivals in our time.

The amusements of the Mexicans were not confined to the theatre and dancing. They had various games, not only for certain fixed seasons and public occasions, but also for the diversion and relaxation of private individuals. Amongst the public games, the race was one in which they exercised themselves from childhood. In the second month, and possibly also at other times, there were military games, among which the warriors represented to the people a pitched battle. All those sports were most useful to the state, for besides the innocent pastime which they afforded to the people, they gave agility to their limbs, and accustomed them to the fatigues of war.

The exhibition of the flyers which was made on certain great festivals, and particularly in secular years, was, though of less public benefit, more celebrated than all others. They fought in the woods for an extremely lofty tree, which, after stripping it of its branches and bark, they brought to the city, and fixed in the centre of some large square. They cased the point of the tree in a wooden cylinder, which, on account of some resemblance in its shape, the Spaniards called a mortar. From this cylinder hung four strong ropes, which served to support a square frame. In the space between the cylinder and the frame, they fixed four other thick ropes, which

which they twisted as many times round the tree as there were revolutions to be made by the fliers. These ropes were drawn through four holes, made in the middle of the four planks of which the frame consisted. The four principal flyers disguised like eagles, herons, and other birds, mounted the tree with great agility, by means of a rope which was laced about it from the ground up to the frame; from the frame they mounted one at a time successively upon the cylinder, and having danced there a little, they tied themselves round with the ends of the ropes, which were drawn through the holes of the frame, and launching with a spring from it, began their flight with their wings expanded. The action of their bodies put the frame and the cylinder in motion; the frame by its revolutions gradually untwisted the cords by which the flyers swung; so that as the ropes lengthened, they made so much the greater circles in their flight. Whilst these four were flying, a fifth danced upon the cylinder, beating a little drum, or waving a flag, without the smallest apprehension of the danger he was in of being precipitated from such a height. The others who were upon the frame (there having been ten or twelve persons generally who mounted) as soon as they saw the flyers in their last revolution, precipitated themselves by the same ropes, in order to reach the ground at the same time amidst the acclamations of the populace. Those who precipitated themselves in this manner by the ropes, that they might make a still greater display of their agility, frequently passed from one rope to another, at that part where, on account of the little distance between them, it was possible for them to do so.

The







The most essential point of this performance consisted in proportioning so justly the height of the tree with the length of the ropes, that the flyers should reach the ground with thirteen revolutions, to represent by such number their century of fifty-two years, composed in the manner we have already mentioned. This celebrated diversion is still in use in that kingdom; but no particular attention is paid to the number of the revolutions, or the flyers; as the frame is commonly sexagonal, or octagonal, and the flyers six or eight in number. In some places they put a rail round the frame, to prevent accidents which were frequent after the conquest; as the Indians became much given to drinking, and used to mount the tree when intoxicated with wine or brandy, and were unable to keep their station on so great a height, which was usually sixty feet.

Amongst the private games of the Mexicans, the most common and most esteemed was one resembling football. The place where they played at it, which they called *Tlachco*, was, according to the description given us by Torquemada, a plain square space of ground, about eighteen perches in length, and proportionably broad, enclosed within four walls, which were thicker below than above, and the side walls were built higher than the others, and well whitened and polished. They were crowned all round with battlements, and on the lower wall stood two idols, which they placed there at midnight with different superstitious ceremonies, and before they ever played in it the place was blessed by the priests, with other forms of the same nature.

Thus Torquemada describes it; but in four or more paintings which we have seen, the draught of this game represents it such as we have given it in our figures,  
which



which is totally different from the description of Torquemada. It is probable, that there were varieties of the same game. The idols placed upon the walls were those of the gods of game, of whose names we are ignorant ; but suspect the name of one of them to have been *Omacatl, the God of Rejoicings*. The ball was made of ule, or elastic gum, three or four inches in diameter, which, although heavier, rebounds more than those made of air. They played in parties, two against two, or three against three. The players were entirely naked except the *maxtlatl*, or large bandage, about their middle. It was an essential condition of the game not to touch the ball, unless it was with the joint of the thigh, or the arm, or elbow, and whoever touched it with his hand or foot, or any other part of the body, lost one of the game. They player who made the ball reach the opposite wall, or made it rebound from it, gained a point. Poor people played for ears of maize, or if they had nothing else they played for the price of their liberty ; others staked a certain number of dresses of cotton ; and rich persons played for articles of gold, precious feathers, and jewels. There were in the space between the players two large stones, resembling in figure our mill-stones, each of which had a hole in the middle, a little larger than the ball. Whoever struck the ball through this hole, which was extremely uncommon, was not only victor in the game, but according to the established law, became the proprietor of the dresses of all those who were present, and such a feat was celebrated as an immortal deed.

This game was in high estimation with the Mexicans, and the other nations of that kingdom, and much practised, as is to be concluded from the surprising number of balls which the cities of Tochtepec, Otatitlan, and  
other

other places, paid in tribute to the crown of Mexico, the number of which, as we have already mentioned, was not less than sixteen thousand. The kings themselves played and challenged each other at this game; as Montezuma II. did *Nezahualpilli*. At present it is not in use among the nations of the Mexican empire; but it is still kept up among the Najarites, the Opates, the Tarmaumarese, and other nations of the North. All the Spaniards who have seen this game were surprised with the uncommon agility of the players.

The Mexicans took great delight also in another game, which some writers have called *patolli* (*b*). They described upon a fine mat made of the palm-tree, a square, within which they drew two diagonal and two cross lines. Instead of dice they threw large beans, marked with small points. According to the points which their dice turned up; they put down, or took up, certain little stones from the junction of the lines, and whoever had three little stones first in a series, was victor.

Bernal Diaz makes mention of another game at which king Montezuma used to amuse himself with the conqueror Cortes, during the time of his imprisonment, which he informs us was called *Totoloque*. That king, he says, threw from a distance certain little balls of gold, at certain pieces of the same metal, which were placed as marks, and whoever made the first five hits won the jewels for which they played.

Among the Mexicans there were persons extremely dexterous at games with the hands and feet. One man laid himself upon his back on the ground, and raising up his feet, took a beam upon them, or a piece of wood, which was thick, round, and about eight feet in length.

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(*b*) Patolli is a generic term signifying every sort of game.

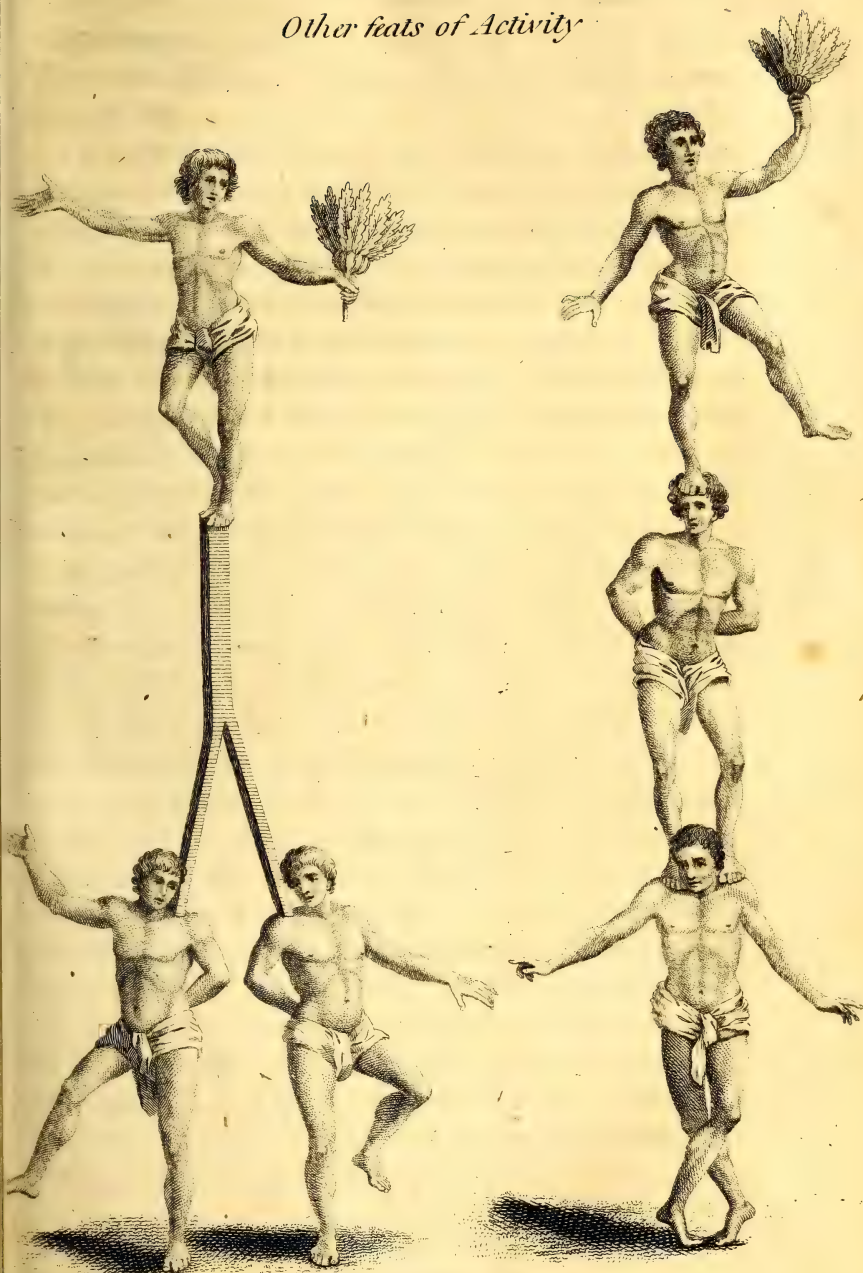
He tossed it up to a certain height, and as it fell he received and tossed it up again with his feet ; taking it afterwards between his feet, he turned it rapidly round, and what is more, he did so with two men sitting astride upon it, one upon each extremity of the beam. This feat was performed at Rome before pope Clement VII. and many Roman princes, by two Mexicans sent over there by Cortes from Mexico, to the singular satisfaction of the spectators. The exercises also which, in some countries are called the powers of Hercules, were extremely common amongst them. One man began to dance ; another placed upright on his shoulders, accompanied him in his movements ; while a third, standing upright upon the head of the second, danced and displayed other instances of agility. They placed also a beam upon the shoulders of two dancers, while a third danced upon the end of it. The first Spaniards, who were witnesses of those and other exhibitions of the Mexicans, were so much astonished at their agility, that they suspected some supernatural power assisted them, forgetting to make a due allowance for the progress of the human genius when assisted by application and labour.

Though games, dances, and music, conduced less to utility than pleasure, this was not the case with History and Painting ; two arts, which ought not to be separated in the history of Mexico, as they had no other historians than their painters, nor any other writings than their paintings to commemorate the events of the nation.

The Toltecas were the first people of the new world who employed the art of painting for the ends of history ; at least we know of no other nation which did so before them. The same practice prevailed, from time immemorial, among the Acolhuas, the seven Aztecan tribes, and



*Other feats of Activity*



*Engraved by Lawson*

*Designed by E. Bowen*



and among all the polished nations of Anahuac. The Chechemecas and the Otomies were taught it by the Acolhuas and the Toltecas, when they deserted their savage life.

Among the paintings of the Mexicans, and all those nations, there were many which were mere portraits or images of their gods, their kings, their heroes, their animals, and their plants. With these the royal palaces of Mexico and Tezcuco both abounded. Others were historical, containing an account of particular events, such as are the first thirteen paintings of the collection of Mendoza, and that of the journey of the Aztecas, which appears in the work of the traveller Gemelli. Others were mythological, containing the mysteries of their religion. Of this kind is the volume which is preserved in the great library of the order of Bologna. Others were codes, in which were compiled their laws, their rites, their customs, their taxes, or tributes; and such are all those of the above mentioned collection of Mendoza, from the fourteenth to the sixty-third. Others were chronological, astronomical, or astrological, in which was represented their calendar, the position of the stars, the changes of the moon, eclipses, and prognostications of the variations of the weather. This kind of painting was called by them *Tonalamatl*. Siguenza makes mention (*i*) of a painting representing such like prognostications which he inserted in his *Ciclographia Mexicana*. Acosta relates “ that in the province of Yucatan, there “ were certain volumes, bound up according to their “ manner, in which the wise Indians had marked the “ distribution of their seasons, the knowledge of the planets, of animals, and other natural productions, and also “ their

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(i) In his work entitled, *Libra Astronomica*, printed in Mexico.



“ their antiquity ; things all highly curious and minutely “ described :” which, as the same author says, were lost by the indiscreet zeal of an ecclesiastic, who, imagining them to be full of superstitious meanings, burned them, to the great grief of the Indians, and the utmost regret of the curious amongst the Spaniards. Other paintings were topographical, or chorographical, which served not only to shew the extent and boundaries of possessions, but likewise the situation of places, the direction of the coasts, and the course of rivers. Cortes says, in his first letter to Charles V. that having made enquiries to know if there was any secure harbour for vessels in the Mexican gulf, Montezuma presented him a painting of the whole coast, from the port of *Chalchiuhcuecan*, where at present Vera Cruz lies, to the river Coatzacualco. Bernal Diaz relates, that Cortes also, in a long and difficult voyage which he made to the Bay of Honduras, made use of a chart which was presented to him by the lords of Coatzacualco, in which all the places and rivers were marked from the coast of Coatzacualco to Huejacallan.

The Mexican empire abounded with all those kinds of paintings ; for their painters were innumerable, and there was hardly any thing left unpainted. If those had been preserved, there would have been nothing wanting to the history of Mexico ; but the first preachers of the gospel, suspicious that superstition was mixed with all their paintings, made a furious destruction of them. Of all those which were to be found in Tezcuco, where the chief school of painting was, they collected such a mass, in the square of the market, it appeared like a little mountain ; to this they set fire and buried in the ashes the memory of many most interesting and curious events. The loss of those monuments of antiquity was inexpressibly afflict-  
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ing to the Indians, and regretted sufficiently afterwards by the authors of it, when they became sensible of their error ; for they were compelled to endeavour to remedy the evil, in the first place by obtaining information from the mouths of the Indians ; secondly, by collecting all the paintings which had escaped their fury, to illustrate the history of the nation ; but although they recovered many, these were not sufficient ; for from that time forward, the possessors of paintings became so jealous of their preservation and concealment from the Spaniards, it has proved difficult, if not impossible to make them part with one of them.

The cloth on which they painted was made of the thread of the maguei, or aloe, or the palm *Icxotl* (*k*), dressed skins, or paper. They made paper of the leaves of a certain species of aloe, steeped together like hemp, and afterwards washed, stretched, and smoothed. They made also of the palm *Icxotl*, and the thin barks of other trees, when united and prepared with a certain gum, both silk and cotton ; but we are unable to explain any particulars of this manufacture. We have had in our hands several sheets of Mexican paper ; it is similar in the thickness to the pasteboard of Europe, but softer, smoother, and easy for writing.

In general they made their paper in very long sheets, which they preserved rolled up like the ancient membranes of Europe, or folded up like bed-screens. The volume of Mexican paintings, which is preserved in the library of Bologna, is a thick skin ill dressed, composed of different pieces, painted all over, and folded up in that manner.

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(*k*) The coarse cloth on which the famous image of the Virgin of Guadalupe is painted, is of the palm *Icxotl*.

The beautiful colours which they employed both in their paintings and in their dyes, were obtained from wood, from leaves, and the flowers of different plants, and various animals. White they obtained from the stone *Chimaltizatl*, which, on calcination, becomes like a fine plaster, or from the *Tizatlalli*, another mineral, which after being made into a paste, worked like clay, and formed into small balls, takes in the fire a white colour resembling Spanish white. Black they got from another mineral, which, on account of its stinking smell, was called *Tlalibijac*, or from the foot of the *Ocotl*, which is a certain aromatic species of pine, collected in little earthen vessels. Blue and azure colours were obtained from the flower of the *Matlalxibuitl*, and the *Xiuhquilipitzahuac*, which is indigo (*l*), although their mode of making them was very different from the way of the moderns. They put the branches of this plant into hot, or rather lukewarm water; and after having stirred them about for a sufficient time with a stick or ladle, they passed the water when impregnated with the dye into certain pots or cups, in which they let it remain until the solid part of the dye was deposited, and then they poured off the water. This lee or sediment was dried in the sun, and afterwards it was placed between two plates near a fire, until it grew hard. The

Mexicans

(*l*) The description of the indigo plant is found in many authors, particularly in Hernandez, lib. iv. cap. 12. which is totally different from that described by Raynal, in the sixth book of his Philosophical and Political History. This author affirms, that Indigo was transplanted from the East Indies to America, and that experiments having been made of it in several countries, the culture of it was established in Carolina, Hispaniola, and Mexico. This however is one of the many mistakes of that philosopher. It is certain, from the testimony of Ferdinand Columbus, in cap. lxi. of the life of his famous parent Christopher Columbus, that one of the plants, native to the island of Hispaniola, was the Indigo. We know also from the historians of Mexico, and particularly Hernandez, that the ancient Mexicans made use of indigo.



Mexicans had another plant of the same name, from which they likewise obtained an azure colour, but of an inferior quality. Red they got from the seeds of the *Achiot* or *Ruocou*, boiled in water ; and purple from the *Nochiztli*, or cochineal. Yellow from the *Tecoza-huitl*, or ochre ; and likewise from the *Xochipalli*, a plant, the leaves of which resemble those of the *Artemisia*. The beautiful flowers of this plant, boiled in water with nitre, furnished them a fine orange colour. In the same manner as they made use of nitre to obtain this colour, they employed alum to obtain others. After grinding and dissolving the aluminous earth in water, which they called *Tlaxocotl*, they boiled it in earthen vessels ; then by distillation, they extracted the allum pure, white, and transparent, and before they hardened it entirely, they parted it in pieces to sell it in the market. To make their colours hold better together, they made use of the glutinous juice of the *Tzauhtli* (*m*), or the fine oil of Chian (*n*).

The figures of mountains, rivers, buildings, trees, and minerals, and, above all, those of men, which appear in the paintings still extant of the Ancient Mexicans, are for the most part unproportioned and deformed ; this, however, we think is not to be ascribed so much to their ignorance of the proportions of objects, or their want of abilities, as to their haste in painting, of which the Spanish conquerors were witnesses : for as they solely  
paid

(*m*) The *Tzauhtli* is a plant very common in that country. Its leaves are similar to those of the leek, its stem is straight and knotty, its flowers tinged with a yellowish green, its root white and fibrous. To extract its juice they broke it and dried it in the sun.

(*n*) Thinking to render a service to the Italian painters, we cultivated with great attention three plants of the Chian sprung from seed sent from Mexico ; they took root successfully, and we had the pleasure of seeing them loaded with flowers in September 1777 ; but the frost of that year coming more early than usual, nipped them entirely.

paid attention to make a faithful representation of things, they neglected making their images perfect, and on that account frequently contented themselves with mere sketches or outlines. However, we have seen among the ancient paintings, many portraits of the kings of Mexico, in which besides the singular beauty of the colours, the proportions were most accurately observed ; but we will, notwithstanding, confess, that the Mexican painters were by no means arrived at much perfection of design, or in mixing shade and light.

The Mexicans used in painting not only to represent the simple images of objects, as some writers have reported, but also employed hieroglyphics and characters (*o*). They represented material things by their proper figures, but in order to abridge and save labour, paper, and colours, they contented themselves with representing a part of an object which was sufficient to make it be understood by the intelligent ; and as we cannot understand the writings of others, until we have learnt to read them, in like manner those American authors required to have been first instructed in the Mexican manner of representing objects, in order to have been able to understand the paintings which served them in place of writings. For things which are even by nature totally devoid of figure, or were difficult of representation, they substituted certain characters ; but these were not verbal, or destined to form words like our letters, but real characters immediately significative of the things, such as the characters of astronomers and algebraists. That our readers may form some idea of them, we have subjoined the Numeral characters of the Mexicans, also those

(*o*) Such authors are effectually refuted by Dr. Eguiera, in the learned preface to his *Bibliotheca Mexicana*, and by us in our *Dissertations*.

those of Time, the Heavens, the Earth, Water, and Air (*p*).

When they would represent any person, they painted a man, or a human head, and over it a figure expressing the meaning of his name, as appears in the figures of the Mexican kings. To express a city, or a village, they painted in the same manner a figure, which signified the same thing with its name. To form their histories or annals, they painted on the margin of the cloth or paper, the figures of the years in so many squares, and at the side of each square the event or events which occurred in that year; and if, on account of the number of years the history of which they meant to relate, they could not all be contained in one canvass, they were continued in another. With respect to the order of representing the years and events, it was at the liberty of the historian to begin at which ever angle of the piece he pleased; but at the same time constantly observing, that if the painting began at the upper angle on the right hand, he proceeded towards the left. If it began, which was most common, at the upper angle on the left hand, he proceeded straight downwards. If he painted the first year at the lower angle on the left, he continued towards the right; but if he began at the lower angle on the right, he proceeded straight upwards; so that on the upper part of his canvass he never painted from left to right, nor ever on the lower part from right to left; never advanced upwards from the left, nor down-

(*p*) Respecting the numeral characters, it is to be observed, they painted as many points as there were units unto twenty. This number has its proper character. Then they doubled it for 20 times, that is 400. This character was doubled in like manner, that is to 8000. Then they began to double the character of 8000. With those three characters, and the points, they expressed whatever number they chose, at least to twenty times 8000, or 160,000. But it is probable this number had its characters also.



downwards by the right. When this method of the Mexicans is understood, it is easy to discover at first sight, which is the beginning and which is the end of any historical painting.

It cannot be denied that this method of expressing things was imperfect, perplexed, and equivocal; but praise is due to the attempt of those people to perpetuate the memory of events, and to their industry in supplying, though imperfectly, the want of letters, which it is probable they would have invented, in their progress to refinement, had their empire been of longer duration; at least they would have abridged and improved their paintings by the multiplication of characters.

Their paintings ought not to be considered as a regular full history, but only as monuments and aids of tradition. We cannot express too strongly the care which parents and masters took to instruct their children and pupils in the history of the nation. They made them learn speeches and discourses, which they could not express by the pencil; they put the events of their ancestors into verse, and taught them to sing them. This tradition dispelled the doubts, and undid the ambiguity which paintings alone might have occasioned, and by the assistance of those monuments perpetuated the memory of their heroes, and of virtuous examples, their mythology, their rites, their laws, and their customs.

Nor did that people make use only of tradition, of paintings, and songs, to preserve the memory of events, but also of threads of different colours, and differently knotted, called by the Peruvians *Quipu*, and by the Mexicans *Nepohualtzitzin*. This curious method of the representation of things, however much used in Peru, does

does not appear to have been employed in the province of Anahuac, if not in the most early ages; for no traces of such monuments are now to be found. Boturini says, that after the most diligent search, he, with difficulty, found one in a place of Tlascala, the threads of which were already wasted and consumed by time. If those who peopled South America ever passed the country of Anahuac, they possibly might have left there this art, which was afterwards abandoned for that of painting, introduced by the Toltecas, or some other nation still more ancient.

After the Spaniards communicated the use of letters to them, several able natives of Mexico, Tezcuco, and Tlascala, wrote their histories partly in Spanish and partly in an elegant Mexican style, which histories are still preserved in some libraries of Mexico, as we have already mentioned.

The Mexicans were more successful in sculpture, in the art of casting metals and mosaic works, than in painting. They expressed the images of their heroes, and of the works of nature, in stone, wood, gold, silver, and feathers, better than on paper; either because the greater difficulty of those labours stimulated greater diligence and exertions, or because the high esteem in which they were held among that people, excited genius and encouraged industry.

Sculpture was one of the arts exercised by the ancient Toltecas. Until the time of the conquest several statues of stone were preserved which had been cut by the artists of that nation; in particular the idol of Tlaloc, placed upon the mountain of the same name, which was so much revered and worshipped by the Chechemecas and Acolhuas, and the gigantic statues erected in the celebrated temples of Teotihuacan. The Mexicans

had sculptors among them when they left their native country Aztlan, for we know that they had at that time formed the idol of Huitzilopochtli, which they carried along with them in their long peregrination.

The usual materials of their statues were stone and wood. They wrought the stone without iron, steel, or any other instrument than a chisel made of flint stone. Their unparalleled phlegmatic nature and constancy in labour, were both necessary to overcome the difficulty, and endure the tediousness of such labours; and they succeeded in spite of the unsuitness of their instruments. They learned to express in their statues all the attitudes and postures of which the human body is capable; they observed the proportions exactly, and could, when necessary, execute the most delicate and minute strokes with the chisel. They not only made entire statues, but likewise cut out in stone, figures in basso relievo, of which kind are those of Montezuma II. and one of his sons, recorded with praises by Acosta. They also made statues of clay and wood, employing for these a chisel of copper. The surprising number of their statues may be imagined from that of their idols, which we mentioned in the preceding book. In this respect we have also to lament the furious zeal of the first bishop of Mexico, and the first preachers of the gospel; who, in order to remove from the sight of their converts all incentives to idolatry, have deprived us of many valuable monuments of the sculpture of the Mexicans. The foundation of the first church, which was built in Mexico, was laid with idols, and so many thousand statues were then broken in pieces and destroyed, that although the kingdom was most abounding in works of that kind, at present the most diligent search can hardly find any



any of them remaining. The conduct of those missionaries was no doubt laudable both in cause and effect, but they should have distinguished between the innocent statues of those people, and their superstitious images, that some of the former might have been kept entire in some place where no evil consequence would have attended their preservation.

The works which they executed by casting of metals were in more esteem with the Mexicans than the works of sculpture, both on account of the greater value of the materials, and the excellence of the art itself. The miracles they produced of this kind would not be credible, if besides the testimony of those who saw them, curiosities in numbers of this nature had not been sent from Mexico to Europe. The works of gold and silver sent in presents from the conqueror Cortes to Charles V. filled the goldsmiths of Europe with astonishment; who, as several authors of that period attest, declared (*q*) that they were altogether inimitable. The Mexican founders made both of gold and silver the most perfect images of natural bodies. They made a fish in this manner, which had its scales alternately one of silver and the other of gold; a parrot with a moveable head, tongue, and wings; and an ape with a moveable head and feet, having a spindle in its hand in the attitude of spinning. They set gems in gold and silver, and made most curious jewellery of great value. In short, these sorts of works were so admirably finished, that even the Spanish soldiers, all stung with the same wretched thirst for gold, valued the workmanship above the materials. This  
wonderful

(*q*) See in particular what is said of those works by the historian Gomara, who had them in his hands, and heard what the goldsmiths of Seville said upon seeing them.

wonderful art, formerly practised by the Toltecas, the invention of which they ascribed to the god Quetzalcoatl, has been entirely lost by the debasement of the Indians, and the indolent neglect of the Spaniards. We are doubtful if there are any remains of those curious works; at least we apprehend, it would be more easy to find some in the cabinets of Europe than in all New Spain. Covetousness to profit by the materials must unquestionably have conquered all desire to preserve them as curiosities.

The Mexicans also wrought with the hammer, but in an inferior manner, and not at all to be compared with the goldsmiths of Europe; for they had no other instruments to beat metals than stones. However it is well known, that they wrought copper well, and that the Spaniards were much pleased with their axes and pikes. The Mexican founders and goldsmiths formed a respectable body of people. They rendered particular worship to their protecting god *Xipe*, and in honour of him held a great festival in the second month, at which human victims were sacrificed.

Nothing, however, was more highly valued by the Mexicans than their mosaic works, which were made of the most delicate and beautiful feathers of birds. They raised for this purpose various species of birds of fine plumage with which that country abounds, not only in the palaces of the king, where, as we have already observed, there were all sorts of animals, but likewise in private houses, and at certain seasons they carried off their feathers to make use of them on this kind of work, or to sell them at market. They set a high value on the feathers of those wonderful little birds which they call *Huitzitzilin*, and the Spaniards *Picaflores*, on account

count of the smallness, the fineness, and the various colours of them. In these and other beautiful birds, nature supplied them with all the colours which art can produce, and also some which art cannot imitate. At the undertaking of every mosaic work several artists assembled; after having agreed upon a design, and taken their measures and proportions, each artist charged himself with the execution of a certain part of the image, and exerted himself so diligently in it with such patience and application, that he frequently spent a whole day in adjusting a feather; first trying one, then another, viewing it sometimes one way, then another, until he found one which gave his part that ideal perfection proposed to be attained. When the part which each artist undertook was done, they assembled again to form the entire image from them. If any part was accidentally the least deranged, it was wrought again until it was perfectly finished. They laid hold of the feathers with small pincers, that they might not do them the least injury, and pasted them on the cloth with *Tzaubtli*, or some other glutinous matter; then they united all the parts upon a little table, or a plate of copper, and flattened them softly until they left the surface of the image so equal and smooth it appeared to be the work of a pencil.

These were the images so much celebrated by the Spaniards and other European nations. Whoever beheld them was at a loss whether he ought to have praised most the life and beauty of the natural colours, or the dexterity of the artist, and the ingenious disposition of art. “These images,” says Acosta, “are deservedly admired; for it is wonderful how it was possible, with the feathers of birds, to execute works so fine  
“ and



“ and so equal, that they appear the performance of the pencil ; and what neither the pencil nor the colours in painting can effect, they have, when viewed from a side, an appearance so beautiful, so lively, and animated, they give delight to the sight. Some Indians, who are able artists, copy whatever is painted with a pencil so perfectly with plumage, that they rival the best painters of Spain.” (r) These works of feathers were even so highly esteemed by the Mexicans as to be valued more than gold. Cortes, Bernal Diaz, Gomara, Torquemada, and all the other historians who saw them, were at a loss for expressions sufficient to praise their perfection (s). A little time ago was living in Pazcuaro, formerly the capital of the kingdom of Michuacan, where this art chiefly flourished since the conquest, the last surviving artist of mosaic works, and with him possibly is now, or will be, finished this admirable art, although for those two last centuries past, it has fallen much short of its ancient perfection. Several works of this kind are still preserved in the museums of Europe, and many in Mexico, but few we apprehend belong to the sixteenth century, and none of those which we know of, were made before the conquest. The mosaic works also which they made of broken shells was extremely curious ; this art is still practised in Guatemala.

In imitation of those skilful artists there were others, who formed with flowers and leaves upon mats many  
beau-

(r) Stor. Nat. e Mor. lib. iv. c. 37.

(s) Gio. Lorenzo d'Anagnia, a learned Italian of the sixteenth century, treating of those images of the Mexicans, observes : “ Amongst others I was greatly astonished at a San Girolamo with a crucifix and a lion, which La Sig. Diana Loffreda shewed me, discovering so much beauty from the liveliness of the natural colours, so well and so justly placed, that I imagined I could never see an equal to it, far less a better, among the ancient or even the most eminent modern painters.”

beautiful works made use of at festivals. After the introduction of Christianity they made these works for ornament; they were sought after most eagerly by the Spanish nobility, on account of the singular beauty of the artifice. At present there are many artists in that kingdom, who employ themselves in counterfeiting with silk the images of feathers; but their performances are by no means comparable with those of the ancients.

A nation so industrious in those arts which could only serve for curiosity and luxury, could not be wanting in those which were necessary to life. Architecture, one of those arts which the necessity of man first invents, was exercised by the inhabitants of the country of Anahuac, at least from the time of the Toltecas. Their successors the Chechemecas, the Acolhuas, and all the other nations of the kingdoms of Acolhuacan, of Mexico, and Michuacan, of the republic of Tlascala, and other provinces, except the Otomies, built houses and formed cities from time immemorial. When the Mexicans arrived in that country, they found it full of large and beautiful cities. They who before they left their native country were skilled in architecture, and used to a social life, constructed in their pilgrimage many edifices in those places where they stopped for some years; some remains of which are still existing as we have already mentioned upon the banks of the river Gila, in Pimeria, and near to the city of Zacatecas. Reduced afterwards to greater hardships upon the little islands of the Tezcucan lake, they built humble huts with reeds and mud, until by the commerce of their fish they were able to purchase better materials. In proportion as their power and riches increased, they enlarged and improved their habitations; so that when the conquerors arrived, they found no less  
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to be admired with their eyes than to be destroyed with their hands.

The houses of the poor were built of reeds, or unburned bricks, or stone and mud, and the roofs made of a long kind of hay which grows thick, and is common in the fields, particularly in hot countries, or of the leaves of the maguei, or aloe, placed in the manner of tiles, to which they bear some resemblance both in thickness and shape. One of the columns or supports of these houses was generally a tree of a regular growth, by means of which, besides the pleasure they took in its foliage and shade, they saved themselves some labour and expense. These houses had for the most part but one chamber, where the family and all the animals belonging to it, the fire-place, and furniture, were lodged. If the family was not very poor, there were more chambers, an *ajauhcalli*, or oratory; a *temazcalli*, or bath, and a little granary.

The houses of lords, and people of circumstances, were built of stone and lime; they consisted of two floors, having halls, large court-yards, and the chambers fitly disposed; the roofs were flat and terraced; the walls were so well whitened, polished, and shining, that they appeared to the Spaniards when at a distance to have been silver. The pavement or floor was plaster, perfectly level, plain, and smooth.

Many of these houses were crowned with battlements and turrets; and their gardens had fish-ponds, and the walks of them symmetrically laid out. The large houses of the capital had in general two entrances, the principal one to the street, the other to the canal: they had no wooden doors to their houses, perhaps, because they thought their habitations sufficiently secure without them  
from



from the severity of the laws against robbers ; but to prevent the inspection of passengers, they covered the entrance with little reeds, from which they suspended a string of cocoas, or pieces of broken kitchen utensils, or some other thing fit to awake by its noise the attention of the family, when any person lifted up the reeds to enter the house. No person was permitted to enter without the consent of the owner. When necessity, or civility, or family connections did not justify the entrance of any person who came to the house, he was listened to without and immediately dismissed.

The Mexicans understood the building of arches and vaults (*t*), as appears from their baths, from the remains of the royal palaces of Tezcuco, and other buildings which escaped the fury of the conquerors, and also from several paintings. Cornices, and other ornaments of architecture, were likewise in use among them. They took great delight in making ornaments of stone, which had the appearances of snares about their doors and windows, and in some buildings there was a large serpent made of stone in the act of biting his tail, after having twisted his body through all the windows of the house. The walls of their buildings were upright and perpendicular ; they must have made use of the plummet, or some other instrument of its nature, although owing to the negligence of historians, we are ignorant of the tools which they employed in building, as well as many other

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things

(*t*) Torquemada says, that when the Spaniards took away the roof from an arch built in the first church of Mexico, the Mexicans from terror durst not enter the church, expecting every moment to see the arch fall. But if they were seized with any such apprehension, it was certainly not occasioned by seeing the arch, which was in use among themselves, but possibly from seeing the scaffolding taken away quickly, or some other circumstance which excited their admiration.

things belonging to this and other arts. Some are of opinion, that the Mexican masons in building walls, filled them up with earth on both sides, and that as the wall was raised, they raised likewise the heaps of earth so high, that, until the building was completed, the walls remained entirely buried and unseen ; on which account the masons had no occasion for planks or scaffolding. But although this mode of building may appear to have been in practice among the Miztecas, and other nations of the Mexican empire, we do not believe that the Mexicans ever adopted it, from the great expedition with which they finished their buildings. Their columns were cylindrical, or square ; but we cannot say whether they had either bases or capitals. They endeavoured at nothing more anxiously than to make them of one single piece, adorning them frequently with figures in basso relievo. The foundations of the large houses of the capital were laid upon a floor of large beams of cedar fixed in the earth, on account of the want of solidity in the soil, which example the Spaniards have imitated. The roofs of such houses were made of cedar, of fir, of cypresses, of pine, or of ojametl ; the columns were of common stone ; but in the royal palaces they were of marble, and some even of alabaster, which many Spaniards mistook for jasper. Before the reign of Ahuitzotl, the walls of houses were built of common stone ; but as they discovered in the time of that king the quarries of the stone Tetzontli, upon the banks of the Mexican lake, it was afterwards preferred as the most fit for the buildings of the capital, it being hard, light, and porous like a sponge : on which account lime adheres very firmly to it. For these properties and its colour, which is a blood red, it is at present valued above any other stone for buildings.

The

The pavements of their courts and temples were in general of the stone of Tenajocan ; but some also were chequered with marble and other precious stones.

Although the Mexicans are not to be compared with the Europeans in regard to taste in architecture, yet the Spaniards were so struck with admiration and surprise on seeing the royal palaces of Mexico, that Cortes, in his first letter to Charles V. unable to find words to describe them, speaks thus : “ He had.” he says, speaking of Montezuma, “ besides those in the city of “ Mexico, other such admirable houses for his habitation, “ that I do not believe I shall ever be able to express “ their excellence and grandeur ; therefore I shall only “ say, that there are no equals to them in Spain.” Such expressions are made use of by Cortes in other parts of his letters ; by the anonymous conqueror in his valuable relation, and by Bernal Diaz in his most faithful history, who were all three present at the conquest.

The Mexicans also constructed, for the convenience of inhabited places, several excellent aqueducts. Those of the capital for conducting the water from Chapultepec, which was two miles distant, were two in number, made of stone and cement five feet high, and two paces broad upon a road raised for that purpose upon the lake, by which the water was brought to the entrance of the city, and from thence it branched out through smaller channels to supply several fountains, and particularly those of the royal palaces. Although there were two aqueducts, the water was only brought by one at a time, as in the interval they cleared the other that they might always have the water pure. At Tezcutzinco, formerly a palace of pleasure of the kings of Tezcucó, may still be seen an aqueduct by which water was conveyed to the royal gardens.

The



The above mentioned road of Chapoltepec, as well as others made upon the lake, and frequently taken notice of in this history, are incontestable proofs of the industry of the Mexicans; but it is still more manifested in the foundation of their city; for whereas other architects have no more to do than to lay a foundation upon solid earth, to raise an edifice, the Mexicans were obliged to make the soil on which they built, uniting by terraces several little islands together. Besides this prodigious fatigue, they had to raise banks and pallisades to render their habitations secure. But if in these works their industry is conspicuous, in many others the Mexicans shew their taste for magnificence. Amongst the monuments of ancient architecture which are extant in the Mexican empire, the edifices of Miſtlan, in Mizteca, are very celebrated; there are many things about them worthy of admiration, particularly a large hall, the roof of which is supported by various cylindrical columns of stone, eighty feet high, and about twenty in circumference, each of them consisting of one single piece.

But this, or any other fabric of Mexican antiquity now remaining, cannot be compared with the famous aqueduct of Chempoallan. This large work, worthy of being ranked with the greatest in Europe, was done about the middle of the sixteenth century. The Franciscan missionary Francisco Tembleque, directed, and the Chempoallese executed it with wonderful perfection. Moved with compassion for the distress which his profelytes suffered from a scarcity of water, as all that could be gathered in trenches and ditches was consumed by the cattle of the Spaniards, that pious father undertook to relieve the necessities of his people at all events.

The

The water was at a great distance, and the country through which it was necessary to conduct it, was mountainous and rocky; but every difficulty was overcome by his zeal and activity, aided by the industry and toil of his converts. They constructed an aqueduct of stone and lime, which, on account of the frequent turnings they were obliged to make in the mountains, was upwards of thirty miles long. The greatest difficulty consisted in crossing three great precipices which intercepted their progress; but this was got over by three bridges, the first consisting of forty-seven, the second of thirteen, and the third, which is the largest and most wonderful of all, having sixty-seven arches. The largest arch, which was in the middle, situated in the greatest depth of the precipice, is one hundred and ten geometrical feet in height, and sixty-one in breadth, so that a large vessel could pass under it. The other sixty-six arches, situated on each side of the largest, diminished gradually on each side unto the edge or top of the precipice, so as to leave the ground level with the course of the aqueduct. This large bridge is 3,178 geometrical feet, or upwards of half a mile in length. The work of it occupied the space of five years, and the whole aqueduct seventeen. We have deemed it not improper to insert the description of this superb fabric; as although it was the undertaking of a Spaniard, after the conquest, it was executed by the Chempoallese, who survived the downfall of their empire.

The ignorant Mr. de P. denies that the Mexicans had either the knowledge, or made use of lime; but it is evident from the testimony of all the historians of Mexico, by tribute rolls, and above all from the ancient buildings still remaining, that all those nations made the same use  
of

of lime as the Europeans do. The vulgar of that kingdom believe, that the Mexicans mixed eggs with lime to render it more tenacious ; but this is an error, occasioned by seeing the ancient walls of a yellowish cast. It is manifest also, from the testimony of the first historians, that burnt tiles or bricks were used by the Mexicans, and that they sold them like all other things in the market-place.

The stone-cutters, who cut and wrought stones for building, did not make use of pickaxes, nor iron chisels, but only of certain instruments of flint-stone ; with these however, they executed beautiful works and engravings. But those sorts of labours without iron do not raise so much wonder as the stones of stupendous size and weight which were found in the capital and other places, transported from great distances, and placed in high situations without the aid of machines which mechanism has invented. Besides common stone they wrought marble, also jasper, alabaster, itztli, and other valuable stones. Of itztli they made beautiful looking-glasses set with gold, and those extremely sharp razors which they fixed in their swords, and which their barbers made use of. They made those razors with such expedition, that in the space of one hour an artificer could finish more than a hundred (*u*).

The Mexican jewellers not only had skill in gems, but likewise understood how to polish, work and cut them, and formed them into whatever figures they chose. Historians affirm, that these works were done with a particular sand ; but it is most certain, they could not do them without some instrument of flint, or hard copper, which is found in that country. The gems  
most

(*u*) Hernandez, Torquemada and Betancourt, describe the manner in which those artists made their razors of the stone itztli.



most common among the Mexicans were emeralds, amethysts, cornelians, turquoises, and some others not known in Europe. Emeralds were so common, that no lord or noble wanted them, and none of them died without having one fixed to his lip, that it might serve him as they imagined instead of a heart. An infinite number of them were sent to the court of Spain in the first years after the conquest. When Cortes returned the first time to Spain, he brought along with him, amongst other inestimable jewels, five emeralds, which, as Gomara, who was then living, bears testimony, were valued at a hundred thousand ducats, and for one of them some Genoese merchants offered him forty thousand, in order to sell it again to the grand signior ( $\kappa$ ); and also two emerald vases, valued, as the celebrated P. Mariana ( $\gamma$ ) says, at three hundred thousand ducats, which vases Cortes lost by the shipwreck which he suffered in the unfortunate expedition of Charles V. against Algiers. At present no more such gems are wrought, nor is even the place of the mines known where they were formerly dug; but there are still some enormous pieces of emerald remaining, namely a sacred stone in the cathedral church of Angelopoli, and another in the parochial

( $\kappa$ ) With regard to Cortes's emeralds, the first was made in form of a rose, the second like a horn, the third like a fish, with eyes of gold: the fourth was a little bell, with a fine pearl for a clapper, and upon the lip this inscription in Spanish, *Bendito quien te criò*, that is, *Blessed be, who created thee*. The fifth, which was the most valuable, and for which the Genoese merchants would have given forty thousand ducats, was a small cup with a foot of gold, and four little chains also of gold, which united in a pearl in the form of a button. The lip of the cup was girt with a ring of gold, on which was engraven this Latin sentence, *Inter natos mulierum non surrexit major*. These five emeralds, wrought by the Mexicans at the order of Cortes, were presented by him to his second wife, the daughter of the Count of Aguilar; jewels, says Gomara, who saw them, better than any other woman whatsoever had in all Spain.

( $\gamma$ ) Mariana in the Summary, or Supplement of the History of Spain.

parochial church of Quechula (unless this is the same transported from thence to Angelopoli), which the priests keep secured with chains of iron, as Betancourt says, that no one may carry it off.

The potters not only made the necessary family utensils of clay, but also other things of mere curiosity, which they embellished with various colours; but they did not understand, by what we can discover, the art of making glass. The most famous potters formerly were the Cholulense, whose vessels were much prized by the Spaniards; at present the most reputed are the potters of Quauhtitlan.

Their carpenters wrought several kinds of wood with instruments made of copper, of which there are still some remains of tolerable workmanship.

Manufactures of various kinds of cloth were common every where; it was one of those arts which almost every person learned. They had no wool, nor common silk, nor lint, nor hemp, but they supplied the want of wool with cotton, that of silk with feathers, with the hair of the rabbit and hare, and that of lint and hemp with *icxotl*, or mountain-palm, with the *quetzalichtli*, the *pati*, and other species of the maguei. Of cotton they made large webs, and as delicate and fine as those of Holland, which were with much reason highly esteemed in Europe. A few years after the conquest, a sacerdotal habit of the Mexicans was brought to Rome, which, as Boturini affirms, was uncommonly admired on account of its fineness and beauty. They wove these cloths with different figures and colours, representing different animals and flowers. Of feathers, interwoven with cotton, they made mantles and bed curtains, carpets, gowns, and other things not less soft than beautiful. We have seen some  
beautiful

beautiful mantles of this kind which are preserved still by some lords; they wear them upon extraordinary festivals, as at those of the coronation of the Spanish kings. With cotton also they interwove the finest hair of the belly of rabbits and hares, after having dyed and spun it into thread; of these they made most beautiful cloths, and in particular winter waistcoats for the lords. From the leaves of the *Pati* and *Quetzalichtli* two species of the maguei, they obtained a fine thread, with which they made cloths equal to those made of lint; and from the leaves of other kinds of the maguei, namely, those of the mountain-palm, they drew a coarser thread, similar to hemp. The method they used to prepare those materials was the same which is practised by the Europeans for lint and hemp. They soaked the leaves in water, then cleaned them, put them in the sun, and beat them until they were fit to spin.

Of the same leaves of the mountain-palm, and also of those of the *izhuatl*, another species of palm, they made extremely fine mats of different colours. They made others more coarse of the rushes which grew in abundance in the lake.

Of the thread of the maguei they made also ropes, shoes, and other things.

They dressed the skins of animals tolerably well, both of quadrupeds and birds, leaving upon some of them the hair or plumage, according to the use which they proposed to make of them.

Lastly, to convey some idea of the taste of the Mexicans in arts, we have thought proper to transcribe here the list of the first things which Cortes sent from Mexico to Charles V. a few days after he arrived in that country (z).

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H h

Two

(z) This list is taken from the history of Gomara, then living in Spain, some things only omitted which were of little importance to be mentioned.



Two wheels, ten hands in diameter, one of gold with the image of the sun, and the other of silver with the image of the moon upon it ; both formed of plates of those metals, with different figures of animals and other things in basso relievo, finished with great ingenuity and art (*a*).

A gold necklace, composed of seven pieces, with a hundred and eighty-three small emeralds set in it, and two hundred and thirty-two gems similar to small rubies, from which hung twenty-seven little bells of gold, and some pearls.

Another necklace of four pieces of gold, with one hundred and two red gems like small rubies, one hundred and seventy-two emeralds, and ten fine pearls set in it, with twenty-six little bells of gold.

A headpiece of wood covered with gold, and adorned with gems, from which hung twenty-five little bells of gold ; instead of a plume it had a green bird with eyes, beak, and feet of gold.

A bracelet of gold. A little rod like a sceptre, with two rings of gold at its extremities, set with pearls.

Four tridents, adorned with feathers of various colours, with pearl points tied with gold thread.

Several shoes of the skin of the deer, sewed with gold thread, the soles of which were made of blue and white stone of Itztli extremely thin (*b*).

A shield of wood and leather, with little bells hanging to it, and covered with plates of gold in the middle, on which was cut the image of the god of war between  
four

(*a*) The wheel of gold was unquestionably the figure of their century, and that of silver the figure of their year, according to what Gomara says, but he did not know it with certainty.

(*b*) Gomara does not express that the soles were made of the stone Itztli, but it is to be understood from his account.

four heads of a lion, a tyger, an eagle, and an owl, represented alive with their hair and feathers.

Several dressed skins of quadrupeds and birds with their plumage and hair.

Twenty-four curious and beautiful shields of gold, of feathers, and very small pearls, and other four of feathers and silver only.

Four fishes, two ducks, and some other birds of cast gold.

Two sea-shells of gold, and a large crocodile girt with threads of gold.

A large mirror adorned with gold, and many small mirrors. Several mitres and crowns of feathers and gold, ornamented with pearls and gems.

Several large plumes of beautiful feathers of various colours, fretted with gold and small pearls.

Several fans of gold and feathers mixed together; others of feathers only, of different forms and sizes, but all most rich and elegant.

A variety of cotton mantles, some all white, others chequered with white and black, or red, green, yellow, and blue; on the outside rough like a shaggy cloth, and within without colour or nap.

A number of under waistcoats, handkerchiefs, counterpanes, tapestries, and carpets of cotton.

All those articles were, according to Gomara, more valuable for the workmanship than the materials. *The colours, he says, of the cotton, were extremely fine, and those of the feathers natural. Their works of cast metal, are not to be comprehended by our goldsmiths.* This present, which was a part of that which Montezuma made to Cortes, a few days after he had disembarked at *Chalchiuhcuecan*, was sent by Cortes to Charles V. in July 1519, and this

this was the first gold and the first silver which was sent from New to Old Spain ; a small presage of the immense treasures it was to send in future.

Amongst other arts exercised by the Mexicans, that of medicine has been entirely overlooked by the Spanish historians, although it is certainly not the least essential part of their history. They have contented themselves with saying, that the Mexican physicians had a great knowledge of herbs, and that by means of these they performed miraculous cures ; but do not mark the progress which they made in an art so beneficial to the human race. It is not to be doubted, that the same necessities which stimulated the Greeks to make a collection of experiments and observations on the nature of diseases, and the virtue of simples, would also have in time led the Mexicans to the knowledge of those two most important parts of medicine.

We do not know whether they intended by their paintings, like the Greeks by their writings, to communicate their lights to posterity. Those who followed the profession of medicine instructed their sons in the nature and differences of the diseases to which the human frame is subject, and of the herbs which Providence has created for their remedy, the virtues of which had been experienced by their ancestors. They taught them the art of discerning the symptoms and progress of different distempers, and to prepare medicines and apply them. We have ample proofs of this in the natural history of Mexico, written by Dr. Hernandez (c). This learned  
and

(c) Hernandez who was physician to Philip II. king of Spain, and much renowned for the works he published concerning the Natural History of Pliny, was sent by that monarch to Mexico, to study the natural history of that kingdom. He employed himself there with other able learned naturalists for several years, assisted by the Mexican physicians. His work, worthy of the expense  
which



and laborious writer had always the Mexican physicians for his guides in the study of natural history, which he prosecuted in that empire. They communicated to him the knowledge of twelve hundred plants, with their proper Mexican names; more than two hundred species of birds; and a large number of quadrupeds, reptiles, fishes, insects, and minerals. From this most valuable, though imperfect history, a system of practical medicine may be formed for that kingdom; as has in part been done by Dr. Farfan, in his *Book of Cures*, by Gregorio Lopez, and other eminent physicians. And if since that time the study of natural history had not been neglected, nor such a prepossession prevailed in favour of every thing which came from beyond the seas, the inhabitants of New Spain would have saved a great part of the expenses they have been at in purchasing the drugs of Europe and of Asia, and reaped greater advantages from the productions of their own country. Europe has been obliged to the physicians of Mexico for tobacco, American balsam, gum copal, liquid amber, sarsaparilla, tecamaca, jalap, barley, and the purgative pine-seeds, and other simples, which have been much used in medicine: but the number of those of which she has been deprived the benefit by the ignorance and negligence of the Spaniards, is infinite.

Among

which it cost of sixty thousand ducats, consisted of twenty-four books of history, and eleven volumes of excellent figures of plants and animals; but the king thinking it too voluminous, gave orders to his physician Nardo Antonio Ricci, a Neapolitan, to abridge it. This abridgement was published in Spanish by Francisco Ximenes, a Dominican, in 1615, and afterwards in Latin, at Rome, in 1651, by the Lincean academicians, with notes and learned dissertations, though rather long and uninteresting. The manuscripts of Hernandez were preserved in the library of the Escorial, from which Nuremberg extracted, according to his own confession, a great part of what he has written in his *Natural History*. F. Claude Clement, a French Jesuit, discoursing of the manuscript of Hernandez, says thus: "Qui omnes libri, & commentarii, si prout affecti sunt, ita forent perfecti, & absoluti, Philippus II. & Franciscus Hernandius haud quaquam Alexandro, & Aristoteli hac in parte concederent."

Among the purgatives employed by the physicians of Mexico, besides jalap, pine-seed, and the small bean, the Mechoacan, so well known in Europe (*d*), was extremely common, also the *Izticpatli*, much celebrated by Hernandez, and the *Amamaxtla*, vulgarly called the *Rhubarb of the Brothers*.

Amongst other emetics the Mexicans made use of the *Mexochitl*, and the *Neixcotlapatli*; and among diuretics the *Axixpatli*, and the *Axixtlacotl*, which is so highly praised by Hernandez. Amongst their antidotes the famous *Contrabierba* was deservedly valued, called by them on account of its figure, *Coanenepilli*, *Tongue of Serpent*, and on account of its effects *Coapatli*, or *remedy against serpents*. Amongst their errhines was the *Zozojatic*, a plant so efficacious, that it was sufficient to hold the root to the nose to produce sneezing. For intermittent fevers they generally employed the *Chatalhuic*, and in other kind of fevers the *Chiautzolli*, the *Iztacxalli*, the *Huehuetzonticomatl*, and above all the *Izticpatli*. To prevent the illness which frequently followed too much exercise at the game of the ball, they used to eat the bark of the *Apitzalpatli* soaked in water. We should never finish if we were to mention all the plants, gums, minerals, and other medicines, both simple and compound, which they employed against all the distempers which were known to them. Whoever desires to be more amply informed on this subject may consult the above mentioned work of Hernandez, and the two treatises published by Dr. Monardes,

(*d*) The celebrated root of Mechoacan is called *Tacuache* by the Tarascas, and *Tlalantlacuitlapilli* by the Mexicans. The knowledge of it was communicated by a physician of the king of Michuacan to the first religious missionaries who went there to preach the gospel; he cured them with it of certain fevers of a putrid nature. By them it was made known to the Spaniards, and from the Spaniards to all Europe.

Monardes, a Sevillian physician, on the medicinal articles, which used to be brought from America to Europe.

The Mexican physicians made use of infusions, decoctions, ointments, and oils, and all those things were sold at market, as Cortes and Bernal Diaz, both eye-witnesses, affirm. The most common oils were those of ule, or elastic gum, *Tlapatl*, a tree similar to the fig, *Chilli*, or great pepper, Chian, and *Ocotl*, a species of pine. The last they obtained by distillation, the others by decoction. That of Chian was more used by painters than physicians.

They extracted from the Huitziloxitl, as we have already mentioned, those two sorts of balsam described by Pliny and other ancient naturalists, that is, the *opobalsam*, or balsam distilled from the tree, and the *xylobalsam* obtained by decoction of the branches. From the bark of the *Huacónex*, soaked four days continually in water, they extracted another liquor equal to balsam. From the plant called by the Spaniards *maripenda*, (a name taken it appears from the language of the Tarascas) they obtained also a liquor equal to balsam, as much in its odour as wonderful effects, by putting the tender stones of the plant, together with the fruit, to boil in water, until the water became as thick as must. In the same manner they obtained many other valuable oils and liquors, namely, that of liquid amber, and that of the fir.

Blood-letting, an operation which their physicians performed with great dexterity and safety with lancets of *Itztli*, was extremely common among the Mexicans, and other nations of Anahuac. The country people used to let themselves blood as they still do with the prickles of the maguei, without employing another person, or interrupting the labour in which they were occupied.

They



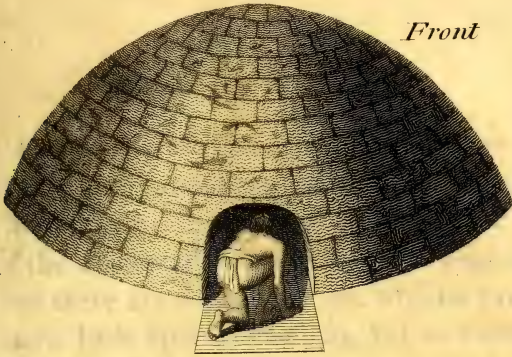
They also used the quills of the *Huitztlacuatzin*, or Mexican porcupine, which are thick, and have a small hole at their points.

Among the means which the Mexicans employed for the preservation of health, that of the bath was very frequent. They bathed themselves extremely often, even many times in the same day in the natural water of rivers, lakes, ditches, and ponds. Experience has taught the Spaniards the advantages of bathing, in that climate, and particularly in the hot countries.

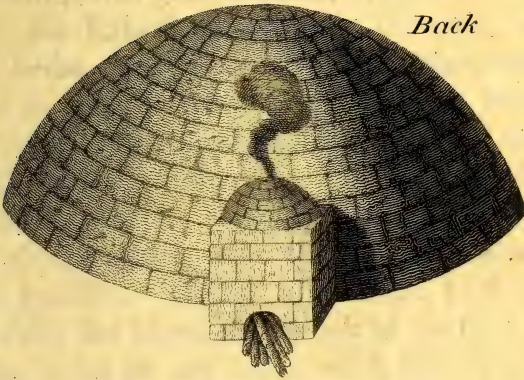
The Mexicans, and other nations of Anahuac, made little less frequent use of the bath *Temazcalli*. Although in all its circumstances it is deserving of particular mention in the history of Mexico, none of the historians of that kingdom have described it, attending more frequently to descriptions and accounts of less importance, so much that if some of those baths had not been still preserved, the memory of them must have totally perished.

The *Temazcalli*, or Mexican vapour-bath, is usually built of raw bricks. The form of it is similar to that of ovens for baking bread; but with this difference, that the pavement of the *Temazcalli* is a little convex, and lower than the surface of the earth, whereas that of most ovens is plain, and a little elevated for the accommodation of the baker. Its greatest diameter is about eight feet; and its greatest height six. The entrance, like the mouth of an oven, is wide enough to allow a man to creep easily in. In the place opposite to the entrance there is a furnace of stone or raw bricks, with its mouth outwards to receive the fire, and a hole above it to carry off the smoke. The part which unites the furnace to the bath, and which is about two feet and a half square, is  
shut

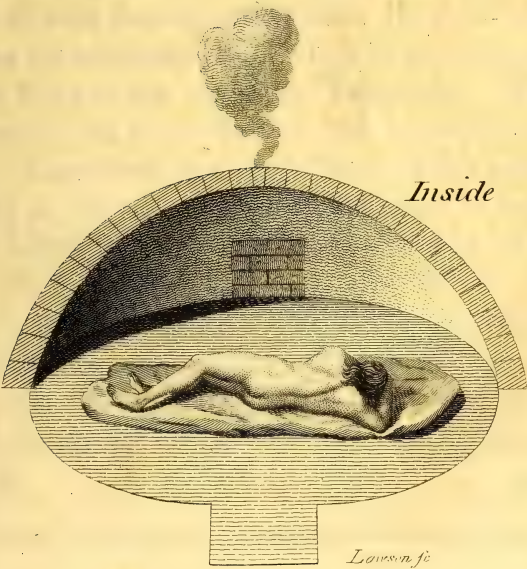
*Temazcalli or vapour Bath*



*Front*



*Back*



*Inside*

*Lauson. sc*

Fig. 1

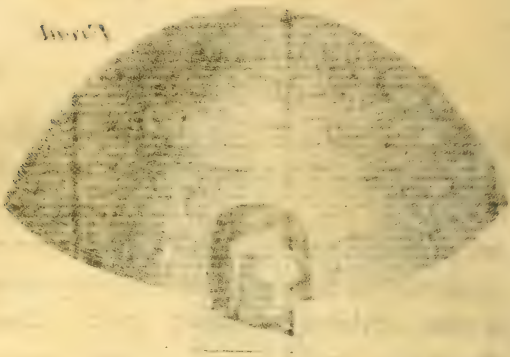


Fig. 2

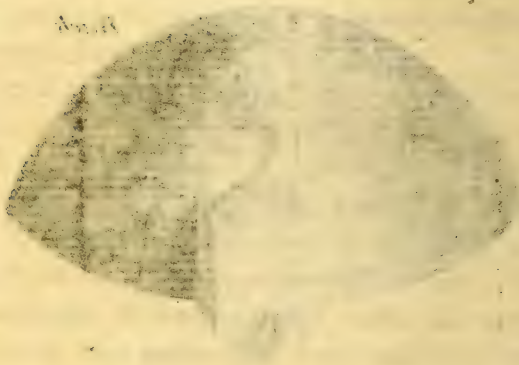
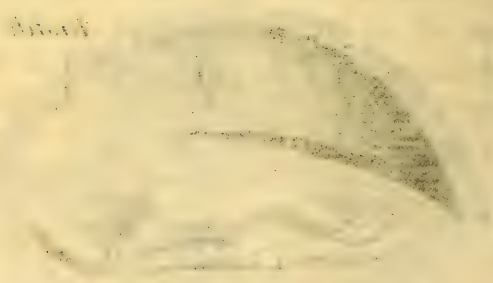


Fig. 3





shut with a dry stone of *Tetzontli*, or some other stone porous like it. In the upper part of the vault there is an air hole, like that to the furnace. This is the usual structure of the *Temazcalli*, of which we have subjoined a figure; but there are others that are without vault or furnace, mere little square chambers, yet well covered and defended from the air.

When any person goes to bathe, he first lays a mat (e) within the *Temazcalli*, a pitcher of water, and a bunch of herbs, or leaves of maize. He then causes a fire to be made in the furnace, which is kept burning, until the stones which join the *Temazcalli* and furnace are quite hot. The person who is to use the bath enters commonly naked, and generally accompanied for the sake of convenience, or on account of infirmity, by one of his domestics. As soon as he enters, he shuts the entrance close, but leaves the air-hole at top for a little time open, to let out any smoke which may have been introduced through the chinks of the stone; when it is all out he likewise stops up the air-hole. He then throws water upon the hot stones, from which immediately arises a thick steam to the top of the *Temazcalli*. While the sick person lies upon the mat, the domestic drives the vapour downwards, and gently beats the sick person, particularly on the ailing part, with the bunch of herbs, which are dipped for a little while in the water of the pitcher, which has then become a little warm. The sick person falls immediately into a soft and copious sweat, which is encreased or diminished at pleasure, according as the case requires. When the evacuation desired is obtained, the vapour is let off, the entrance is

VOL. II. I i clear-

(e) The Spaniards, when they bathed, made use of a mattress for more convenience.

cleared, and the sick person clothes himself, or is transported on the mat to his chamber ; as the entrance to the bath is usually within some chamber of his habitation.

The Temazcalli has been regularly used in several disorders, particularly in fevers occasioned by costiveness. The Indian women use it commonly after child-birth, and also those persons who have been stung or wounded by any poisonous animal. It is, undoubtedly, a powerful remedy for all those who have occasion to carry off gross humours, and certainly it would be most useful in Italy where the rheumatism is so frequent and afflicting. When a very copious sweat is desired, the sick person is raised up and held in the vapour ; as he sweats the more, the nearer he is to it. The Temazcalli is so common, that in every place inhabited by the Indians there are many of them.

With respect to the surgery of the Mexicans, the Spanish conquerors attest their expedition and success in dressing and curing wounds (*f*).

Besides the balsam and maripenda, they employed the milk of the *Itzontecpatli* (*species of thistle*), tobacco, and other herbs. For ulcers they used the *Nanahuapatli*, the *Zacatlipatli*, and the *Itzcuinpatli* ; for abscesses and several swellings, the *Tlalamatl*, and the milk of the *Chilpatli* ; and for fractures the *Nacazol*, or *Toloatzin*. After drying and reducing the seed of this plant to powder, they mixed it with a certain gum, and applied it to the affected part, covered the part with feathers, and over it laid little boards to set the bones.

The

(*f*) Cortes himself being in great danger of his life from a wound he received on his head in the famous battle of Otompan, was greatly relieved, and at last perfectly cured by the Tlascalan art of surgery.

The physicians were in general the persons who prepared and applied medicines; but they accompanied their cures with several superstitious ceremonies, with invocations to their gods, and imprecations against distempers, in order to render their art more mysterious and estimable. The physicians held the goddess *Tzapotlatenan* in veneration, as the protectress of their art, and believed her to have been the discoverer of many medicinal secrets, and amongst others of the oil which they extracted by distillation from the *Ocotl*.

It is wonderful that the Mexicans, and especially the poor among them, were not subject to numberless diseases, considering the quality of their food. This is an article in which singular circumstances attended them; for having been, for many years after the foundation of Mexico, subjected to the most miserable kind of life upon the little islands of the lake, they were constrained by necessity to feed upon whatever they could find in the waters. During that disastrous time, they learned to eat, not only the roots of the marsh plants, water serpents, which abounded there, the *Axolotl*, *Atetepiz*, *Atopinan*, and other such little animals, inhabitants of the water; but even ants, marsh flies, and the very eggs of the same flies. They fished such quantities of those flies, called by them *Axajatl*, that they eat them, fed several kinds of birds with them, and carried them to market. They pounded them together, and made little balls of them, which they rolled up in leaves of maize, and boiled in water with nitre. Some historians who have tasted this food, pronounce it not disagreeable. From the eggs, which those flies deposit in great abundance on the rushes in the lake, they extracted that singular species of caviare which they called *Ahuauhtli*.

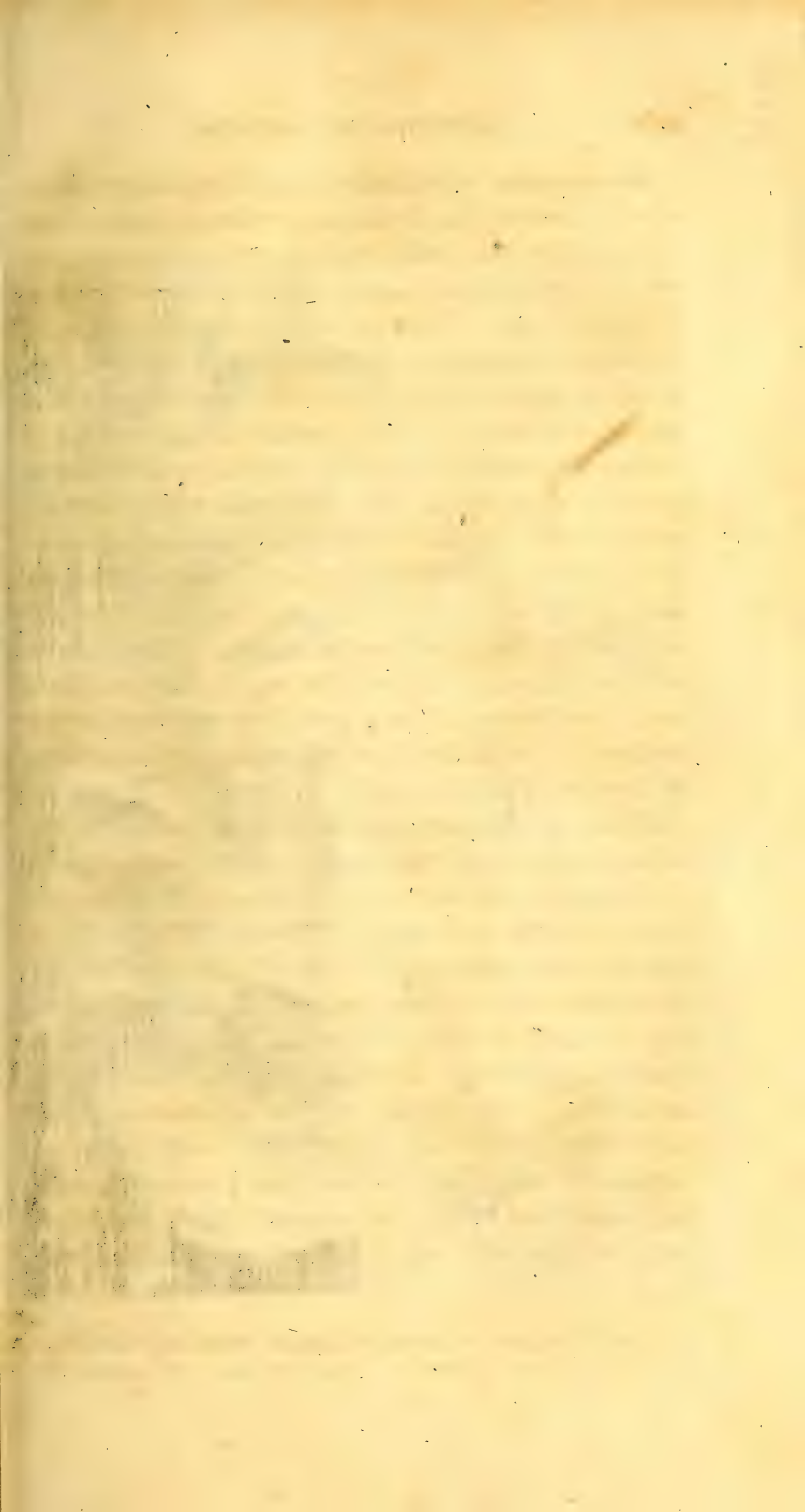
Not



Not contented with feeding upon living things, they eat also a certain muddy substance that floats upon the waters of the lake, which they dried in the sun, and preserved to make use of it as cheese, which it resembled in flavour and taste. They gave this substance the name of *Tecuitlatl*, or excrement of stones. Accustomed thus to those vile articles of food, they were unable to abandon them in the season of their greatest plenty; on which account the market was always seen full of innumerable species of raw, boiled, fried, and roasted little animals, which were sold there particularly to the poor. However, as soon as by their commerce with fish they were able to purchase better aliment, and to cultivate by the exertions of their industry the floating gardens of the lake, they entertained themselves with better provisions, and at their meals there was nothing wanting, as the conqueror says, either in respect to the plenty, variety, or nicety of their dishes (g).

Among the eatables, the first place is due to maize, which they called *Tlaolli*, a grain granted by Providence to that part of the world, instead of the corn of Europe, the rice of Asia, the millet of Africa, over all which it possesses some advantages; as besides its being wholesome, relishing, and more nutritive, it multiplies more, thrives equally in different climes, does not require so much culture, is not so delicate as corn, stands not in need, like rice, of a moist soil, nor is it hurtful to the health of the cultivator. They had several species of maize, differing in size, colour, and quality from each other. Of maize they made their bread, which is totally different from that of Europe in taste and appearance,

(g) See the first letter of Cortes, the history of Bernal Diaz, and the relation of the anonymous conqueror.







ance, and in the manner of making it, which they formerly had, and still continue to use. They put the grain to boil in water with a little lime; when it becomes soft, they rub it in their hands to strip off the skin; then pound it in the *Metlatl* (*b*), take out a little of the paste, and stretching it by beating it with both hands, they form the bread, after which they give it the last preparation in the *Comalli*. The form of the bread is round and flat, about eight inches in diameter, and one line or more in thickness; but they make their loaves or cakes still smaller and thinner, and for the nobles they make them as thin as our thickest paper. It was customary also to mix something else with the bread to make it still more wholesome and relishing. For persons of rank and circumstances, they used to make bread of red maize, mixing with it the beautiful flower *coat-zontecoxochitl*, and several medicinal herbs, to diminish its heat to the stomach. This is the sort of bread which the Mexicans, and all the other nations of those extensive regions, have used until our time, preferring it to the best bread of wheat. Their example has been imitated by many Spaniards; but to speak impartially, this bread, although it is extremely wholesome and substantial, and when fresh made of a good taste, becomes rather disagreeable when stale. The making of bread, as well as the preparing and dressing of every kind of meat, has always among those nations been the peculiar occupation of their women. They were the persons who made it for their families, and who sold it in the market.

Besides bread, they made many other meats and drinks of maize, with different ingredients and preparations.

(*b*) The Spaniards call the *Metlatl* *metate*, the *Comalli* *comal*, of which we shall presently speak, and the *Atolli* *atole*.

tions. The *atolli* is a gruel of maize, after it has been boiled, well-ground, dissolved in water, and strained. They put the strained liquor over a fire, and give it another boiling until it becomes of a certain thickness. The Spaniards think it insipid to the taste, but they give it commonly to sick persons, as a most salutary food, sweetening it with a little sugar, instead of honey, which is used by the Indians. To them it is so grateful they cannot live without it. It was formerly and still is their breakfast, and with it they bear the fatigues of agriculture, and other servile offices, in which they are employed. Hernandez describes eighteen species of *atolli*, which differ both with regard to the seasoning ingredients, and the manner of preparing them.

Next to maize, the vegetables most in use were the cacao, the chia, and the French bean. Of the cacao they made several common drinks, and among others that which they called *Chocolatl*. They ground equal quantities of the cacao and the seeds of *Pochotl*, put them both with a proportionable quantity of water into a little pot, in which they stirred and turned them with that little indented instrument of wood, which the Italians call *frullo*, the Spaniards *molinillo*, and the English *milling-stick*; then they poured off the floating oily part into another vessel.

Into the remainder they put a handful of paste of boiled maize, and boiled it for a certain time, after which they mixed it with the oily part, and took it when it was cool. This is the origin of the famous chocolate, which the cultivated nations of Europe have used in imitation of them, as well as the name and instruments for making it; although the name is a little corrupted, and the drink altered according to the language and  
taste

taste of each nation. The Mexicans used to put in their chocolate, and other drinks which they made of the cacao, the *Tlilxochitl*, or vaniglia, the flower of the *Xochinacaztli* (*k*), and the fruit of the *Mecaxochitl* (*l*), and sometimes also honey, as the Europeans put sugar, both to render it palatable and more wholesome.

Of the seed of the chia they made a most refreshing drink, which is still very common in that kingdom; and of this seed also, with maize, they made the chianzot-zoolatelli, which was an exquisite drink much used by the ancients, particularly in time of war. The soldier, who carried with him a little bag of flour of maize and chia, thought himself amply provided. When necessary, he boiled the quantity he wished for, mixing a little honey of the maguei with it; and by means of this delicious and nourishing beverage (as Hernandez calls it), endured the ardour of the sun and the fatigues of war.

The Mexicans did not eat so much flesh as the Europeans; nevertheless upon occasion of any banquet, and daily at the tables of the lords, different kinds of animals were served up; such as deer, rabbits, Mexican boars, *Tuze*, *Techichi*, which they fattened as the Europeans do hogs and other animals of the land, the water, and the air, but the most common were turkies and quails.

The

(*k*) The tree of the *Xochinacaztli* has long, straight, narrow leaves, of a dark green colour. Its flower consists of six petals, which are purple within, green without, and pleasingly odorous. From the resemblance of their figure to an ear, they were called by this name among the Mexicans, and by the Spaniards *orejuela*, or *little ear*. The fruit is angular, and of a bloody colour, and grows within a pod of six inches in length, and about one inch thick. It is peculiar to hot countries. The flower was greatly valued, and never wanting in the markets.

(*l*) The *Mecaxochitl* is a small flexible plant, whose leaves are large and thick, and the fruit resembles long pepper.



The fruits most used by them were the mamei, the *tlilzapotl*, the *cochitzapotl*, the *chietzapotl*, the ananas, the chirionoja, the *abuacatl*, the anona, the pitahaja, the *capolin*, or Mexican cherry, and different species of *Tune*, or Indian figs, which fruits well supplied the want of pears, apples, and peaches.

Amongst all their plenty of foods the Mexicans were destitute of milk, and fat, as they had neither cows, sheep, goats, nor hogs. With respect to eggs, we do not know that they eat any, except those of turkeys and iguanas, the flesh of which they likewise did and still eat.

The usual seasoning to their food, besides salt, was great pepper and tomate, which have become equally common among the Spaniards of that country.

They drank also several sorts of wine, or beverages similar to them, of the maguei, the palm, of the stems of maize, and of the grain also, of which last, called *chicha*, almost all the historians of America make mention, as it is the kind most generally used in that new world. The most common with the Mexicans, and also the best was that of the maguei, called *octli* by them, and by the Spaniards *pulque* (*m*). The method of making it is this. When the maguei, or Mexican aloe, arrives at a certain height and maturity, they cut the stem, or rather the leaves while tender, of which the stem is formed, situated in the centre of the plant, after which there remains a certain cavity. They shave the internal surface of the large leaves which surround the cavity, and collect the sweet juice which distils from them in such abundance, that

(*m*) *Pulque* is not a Spanish nor Mexican word, but is taken from the *Araucan* language which is spoken in Chili, in which the *Pulcu* is the general name, for the beverages these Indians use to intoxicate themselves; it is difficult to say how the term has passed to Mexico.

that one single plant generally yields, in the space of six months, six hundred, and in the whole time of its fruitfulness more than two thousand pounds of juice (*n*).

They gather the juice from the cavity with a long narrow gourd, which serves instead of a more artificial contrivance, and pour it into a vessel until it ferments, which it usually does in less than twenty-four hours. To assist the fermentation, and make the beverage stronger, they infuse a certain herb which they name *Ocpatli*, or remedy of wine. The colour of this wine is white, the taste a little rough, and its strength sufficient to intoxicate, though not so much as that of the grape. In other respects it is a wholesome liquor, and valuable on many accounts as it is an excellent diuretic, and a powerful remedy against the diarrhoea. The consumption made of this liquor is surprising as it is useful, for the Spaniards become rich by it. The revenue produced by that alone which is consumed in the capital amounts annually to three hundred thousand crowns; one Mexican rial only being paid for every twenty-five Castilian pounds. The quantity of pulque, which was consumed in the capital in 1774, was two millions two hundred and fourteen thousand, two hundred ninety-four and half *arrobos*, or upwards of sixty-three millions eight hundred thousand Roman pounds, exclusive of that which was smuggled in there, and that which the privileged Indians sell in the great market-place.

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The

(*n*) Betancourt says, that a maguel makes in six months twenty *arrobos* of pulque, which are more than six hundred Italian pounds. He might know this well, having been for many years a rector among the Indians. Hernandez affirms, that from one single plant are extracted fifty *anfore*. The Castilian *anfora*, which is smaller than the Roman, contains, according to the calculation of Mariana, five hundred and twelve ounces of wine, or common water. Supposing that the pulque does not weigh more than water, fifty *anfore* will be more than two thousand pounds.

The Mexicans were less singular in their dress than in their food. Their usual habit was quite simple, consisting solely of the *maxtlatl* and *tilmatli* in the men, and of the *cueitl*, and the *buepilli*, in the women. The *maxtlatl* was a large belt or girdle, the two ends of which hung down before and behind to cover the parts of shame. The *tilmatli* was a square mantle, about four feet long; the two ends were tied upon the breast, or upon one shoulder, as appears in our figures. The *cueitl*, or Mexican gown, was also a piece of square cloth, in which the women wrapped themselves from their waists down to the middle of the leg. The *buepilli* was a little under vest, or waistcoat, without sleeves.

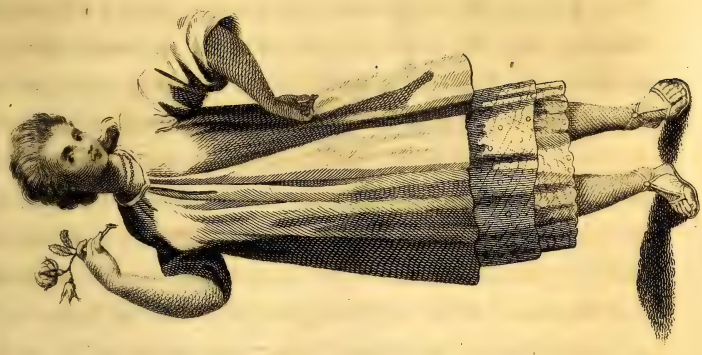
The dress of the poor people was made of the thread of the maguei, or mountain palm, or at best the cloth of coarse cotton; but those of better station wore the finest cotton, embellished with various colours, and figures of animals, or flowers, or wove with feathers, or the fine hair of the rabbit, and adorned with various little figures of gold and loose locks of cotton hanging about the girdle or *maxtlatl*. The men used to wear two or three mantles, and the women three or four vests, and as many gowns, putting the longest undermost, so as that a part of each of them might be seen. The lords wore in winter waistcoats of cotton, interwoven with soft feathers, or the hair of the rabbit. Women of rank wore, besides the *buepilli*, an upper vest, something like the surplice or gown of our ecclesiastics, but larger and with longer sleeves (o).

Their shoes were nothing but soles of leather, or coarse cloth of the maguei, tied with strings, and only covered

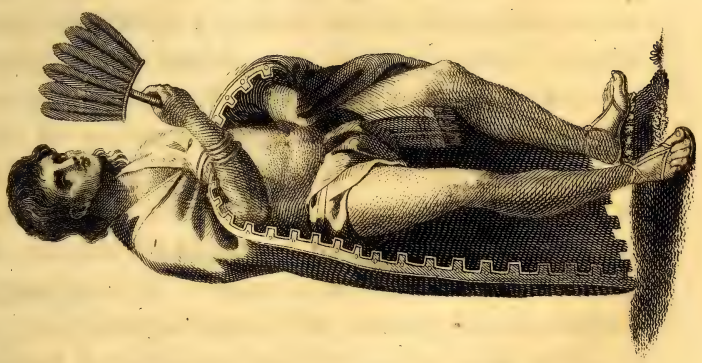
(o) We have spoken elsewhere of the habits of the kings, priests, and military persons.



*A Woman of Rank*



*A Noble*



Engraved by Lawson.  
Printed by F. Brown



covered the under part of the foot. The kings and lords adorned the strings with rich ribands of gold and jewels.

All the Mexicans wore their hair long, and were dishonoured by being shaved, or having it clipped, except the virgins consecrated to the service of the temples. The women wore it loose, the men tied in different forms, and adorned their heads with fine plumes, both when they danced and when they went to war.

It would be difficult to find a nation which accompanied so much simplicity of dress, with so much vanity and luxury in other ornaments of their persons. Besides feathers and jewels, with which they used to adorn their clothes, they wore ear-rings, pendants at the under-lip, and many likewise at their noses, necklaces, bracelets for the hands and arms, and also certain rings like collars about their legs. The ear-rings and pendants of the poor were shells, pieces of crystal, amber, or some other shining little stone; but the rich wore pearls, emeralds, amethysts, or other gems, set in gold.

Their household furniture was by no means correspondent to this passion for personal finery. Their beds were nothing else than one or two coarse mats of rushes, to which the rich added fine palm mats, and sheets of cotton; and the lords, linen woven with feathers. The pillow of the poor was a stone or piece of wood; that of the rich, probably of cotton. The common people did not cover themselves in bed with any thing else than the tilmatlí, or mantle, but the higher ranks and nobles made use of counterpanes of cotton and feathers. At dinner, instead of a table, they spread a mat upon the ground; and they used napkins, plates, porringers, earthen pots, jugs, and other vessels of fine clay,



clay, but not, as we can discover, either knives or forks. Their chairs were low seats of wood and rushes, or palm, or a kind of reed called *icpalli* (*p*). No house wanted the *metlatl*, or *comalli*. The *metlatl* was the stone in which they ground their maize, and the cacao, as is represented in our figure of their mode of making bread. This instrument is still extremely common in all New Spain, and over the greatest part of America. The Europeans have also adopted it, and in Italy and elsewhere the chocolate-makers use it to grind the cacao. The *comalli* was, and still is, being as much used as the *metlatl*, a round and rather hollow pan, which is about an inch thick, and about fifteen in diameter.

The drinking vessels of the Mexicans were made of a fruit similar to gourds, which grow, in hot countries, on trees of a middling size. Some of them are large and perfectly round, which they call *Xicalli* (*q*), and others smaller and cylindrical, which they give the name of *Tecomatl*. Both these fruits are solid and heavy: their rind is hard, woody, and of a dark green colour, and the seeds are like those of gourds. The *xicalli* is about eight inches in diameter; the *tecomatl* is not so long, and about four fingers in thickness. Each fruit when divided in the middle made two equal vessels; they cut out all the seed, and gave them a varnish with a particular mineral;

(*p*) The Spaniards corrupt the word into *Equipales*.

(*q*) The Spaniards of Mexico called the *Xicalli* *Xicara*. The Spaniards of Europe adopted this word to signify the little cup for taking chocolate, and thence came the Italian *Chicchera*. Bomare makes mention of the tree *Xicalli*, under the name of *Calebassier d' Amerique*, and says, that in New Spain, it is known under the names of *Choyne*, *Cujete*, and *Hyguero*; but this is a mistake. The name *Hibuero* (not *Hyguero*) was that which the Indians of the Island of Hispaniola gave to this tree; the Spanish conquerors made use of it formerly, but no use was made of it afterwards in New Spain. None of the other trees were ever heard of by us in those countries.

neral earth, of a pleasing smell, and of different colours, particularly a fine red. At present they are frequently gilt with silver and gold.

The Mexicans made use of no candlesticks, nor wax, nor tallow candles, nor of oil to make light; for although they had many kinds of oil, they never employed it otherwise than in medicine, in painting, and in varnishes; and although they extracted a great quantity of wax from the honey-combs, they either did not know, or were not at the pains to make lights with it. In maritime countries they made use of shining beetles for that purpose; but in general they employed torches of *ocotl*, which, although they made a fine light, and yielded an agreeable odour, smoked and soiled their habitations with soot. One of the European customs which they chiefly prized upon the arrival of the Spaniards, was that of candles; but those people had certainly little occasion for candles, as they devoted all the hours of the night to repose, after employing all those of the day in business and toil. The men laboured at their different professions, and the women baked, wove, embroidered, prepared victuals, and cleaned their houses. All daily made orisons to their gods, and burned copal in honour of them, and therefore no house, however poor the possessor, wanted idols or censers.

The method which the Mexicans and other nations practised to kindle fire, was the same which the ancient shepherds of Europe employed (r), by the friction of  
two

(r) *Calidæ morus, laurus; bederæ, & omnes ex quibus igniaria fiunt. Exploratorum hoc usus in castris Pastorumque reperit; quoniam ad excutiendum ignem non semper lapidis est occasio. Teritur ergo lignum ligno, ignemque concipit attritu, excipiente materia aridi fomitis, fungi, vel foliorum facillimè conceptum.* Plinius Hist. Nat. lib. xvi. c. 40. The same thing is observed in the second book of the *Questiones Naturales* of Seneca, and also in other ancient writers.

two pieces of wood. The Mexicans generally used the *achiote*, which is the *roucou* of the French. Boturini affirms, that they struck fire also from flint.

After a few hours of labour in the morning they took their breakfast, which was most commonly *atolli*, or gruel of maize, and their dinner after mid-day ; but among all the historians of Mexico, we have found no mention of their supper. They ate little, but they drank frequently, either of the wine of the *maguei*, or maize, or of *chia*, or some other drink of the cacao, and sometimes plain water.

After dining, the lords used to compose themselves to sleep with the smoke of tobacco (s). This plant was greatly in use among the Mexicans. They make various plasters with it, and took it not only in smoke at the mouth, but also in snuff at the nose. In order to smoke it, they put the leaves with the gum of liquid amber, and other hot, warm, and odorous herbs, into a little pipe of wood, or reed, or some other more valuable substance. They received the smoke by sucking the pipe and shutting the nostrils with their fingers, so that it might pass by the breath more easily towards the lungs. Who would have believed that the use of tobacco, which necessity made those phlegmatic nations invent, would have become the vice or custom of almost all

(s) *Tobacco* is a name taken from the *Haitine* language. The Mexicans had two species of tobacco, very different in the size of the plant and the leaves, in the figure of the flower and the colour of the seed. The smallest, which is the common one, was called by them *Picietl*, and the largest *Quaujetl*. This last becomes as high as a moderate tree. Its flower is not divided into five parts like that of the *Picietl*, but only cut into six or seven angles. These plants vary much according to climate, not only in the quality of the tobacco, but also in the size of the leaves and other circumstances, on which account several authors have multiplied the species.



all the nations of the world ; and that so humble a plant, of which the Europeans wrote and spoke so unfavorably, would have made one of the greatest revenues of the kingdoms of Europe ? But what ought to excite still greater wonder, is, that although the use of tobacco is now so common among those nations who formerly despised it, it is now so rare among its inventors, that there are extremely few of the Indians of New Spain who take it in smoke, and none at all who use it in snuff.

As the Mexicans wanted candles to make light, they also were without soap to wash with, although there were animals from which they might have obtained it (*t*) ; but they supplied that deficiency by a fruit and a root. The fruit was that of the *copalxocotl*, a tree of moderate size, which is found in Michuacan, Yucatan, Mizteca, and elsewhere (*u*). The pulp, that is under the rind of the fruit, which is white, viscous, and very bitter, makes water white, raises a froth, and serves like soap to wash and clean linen. The root is that of the *amolli*, a small plant, but very common in that country, for which *Saponaria Americana* seems to be a more proper name, as it is not very dissimilar to the *Saponaria* of the old continent ; but the *amolli* is more used to wash the body now, and more particularly the head, than for clothes (*x*).

We

(*t*) We have heard that an excellent soap is obtained from the *cpatl*, or *Zorriglio*.

(*u*) Hernandez makes mention of it under the name of *Copalxocotl*, but says nothing of its detergent quality ; Betancourt speaks of it under the name of the *soap-tree*, by which it is known among the Spaniards ; and Valmont describes it under the name of *Savonier*, and *Saponaria Americana*. The root of this tree also is used instead of soap, but it is not so good as the fruit.

(*x*) There is a species of *amolli*, the root of which dyes hair the colour of gold. We saw this singular effect produced upon the hair of an old man.

We have now given all that we think worthy of credit and public relation concerning the political œconomy of the Mexicans. Such was their government, their laws, their customs, and their arts, when the Spaniards arrived in the country of Anahuac, the war and memorable events of which make the subject of the following books.

## BOOK VIII.

*The arrival of the Spaniards upon the Coast of Anahuac.*

*The uneasiness, embassies, and presents of Montezuma. Confederacy of the Spaniards with the Nation of the Totonacas, their War and Alliance with the Tlascalans ; their Severity to the Cholulans, and their solemn Entry into Mexico. Account of the celebrated Indian Donna Marina. Foundation of Vera Cruz, the first Colony of the Spaniards.*

THE Spaniards, who ever since the year 1492, had discovered the New World, under the conduct of the celebrated Genoese Christopher Columbus ; and, in the space of a few years, subjected to the crown of Castile the principal islands of the Antilles, made frequent cruises from thence to discover new countries, and barter European toys for American gold. In the year 1517, amongst other adventurers, Francisco Hernandez, of Cordova, weighed anchor from the port of Ajaruco, now called the Havanna, with one hundred and ten soldiers, and proceeding to the westward by the advice of Antonio Alaminas, one of the most famous and skilful pilots of that time, and then veering to the southward, discovered, in the beginning of March, the eastern cape of the peninsula of Yucatan, which they called *Capo Catoche*. They coasted along a part of that country, admiring the beautiful edifices and lofty towers which appeared upon the coast, and the (a) different coloured habits which the

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L I

Indians

(a) Dr. Robertson says, in book iii. that the Spaniards landed, and advancing into the country (of Yucatan), observed, with amazement, large houses built of stone. Thus he speaks where he recounts the voyage of Hernandez. But a few pages after, speaking



Indians wore ; objects never before seen in the New World. The Yucatanese, on their part, marvelled at the size, the form, and decorations of their vessels. At two places where the Spaniards landed, they had some skirmishes with the Indians, in which, and by other distresses that attended them, they lost the half of their soldiers, and their captain himself received twelve wounds, which in a few days occasioned his death. Having returned precipitately to Cuba, with the accounts of their expedition, and some gold which they had robbed from a temple and brought with them for show, they awoke the avaricious passions of Diego de Velasquez, formerly a conqueror, and then governor of that island ; upon which he next year fitted out his relation Juan de Grijalva, with four vessels, and two hundred and forty soldiers. This commander, after having discovered the island of Cozumel, a few miles distant from the eastern shore of Yucatan, coasted along all that country, which lies from thence to the river Panuco, exchanging little glafs

speaking of the voyage of Grijalva, he writes thus : *Many villages were scattered along the shore, among which, they (the Spaniards) could discern houses of stone, which at a distance appeared white and magnificent. In the heat of their imagination, they represented to themselves that these were so many cities adorned with towers and cupolas.* Among all the historians of Mexico, we have not found one who has said, that the Spaniards imagined there were cupolas in Yucatan. This idea belongs to Robertson, not to them. They thought they saw high towers and large houses, as, in fact, they were. The temples of Yucatan, like those of Anahuac, were built for the most part in the form of towers, and were very lofty. Bernal Diaz, an author of the utmost veracity, and an eye-witness of all that happened to the Spaniards in their first voyages to Yucatan, when he speaks of the disembarkment they made in their first voyage to the coast of Campeachy, says thus : *They, the Indians, conducted us to some houses, which were large and tolerably well built of stone and lime.* From which it appears they not only saw the buildings at a distance, but approached to them and entered them. The use of lime having been so common among those nations, it is not wonderful that the practice of whitening them also was common. See our seventh book. At any rate we cannot comprehend, how a house at a distance should seem white if it really was not so.

glafs balls, and fuch like trifling wares, for gold, which they anxiously fought, and the provifions they required.

When they arrived at that little ifland, which they called *St. Juan de Ulua* (b), little more than a mile diftant from the fhore of Chalchiuhcuecan; the Mexican governors of thofe coafts, confounded at the fight of veffels fo large, and men of fo ftrange an afpect and figure, confulted together what they fhould do on the occafion, and determined to repair in perfon to the court to give intelligence to the king of fo extraordinary an occurrence. But in order to convey to him a more perfect idea of the particulars, they caufed the veffels, artillery, arms, drefs, and appearance of the new people to be represented in fome measure by their painters; after which, they fet off without farther delay to the court, to relate what had arrived upon the coaft, prefenting to the king, along with the paintings, fome little balls of glafs, which they had got from the Spaniards. Montezuma was extremely difturbed on hearing their account; but, to avoid any rash ftep in an affair of fuch confequence and alarm, he held a council with Cacamatzin, king of Acolhuacan, his nephew, Cuitlahuatzin, lord of Iztapalapan, his brother, and other twelve perfonages, his ordinary counfellors. After a long conference they concluded unanimoufly, that he who had landed upon that fhore, with fo great an army, could be no other perfon than *Quetzalcoatl*, the god of air, who had for many years been expected in that country;

(b) They gave to this ifland the name of S. Juan; becaufe they arrived there on the day of S. Precursor, and becaufe this was the name of the commander. They called it Ulua alfo, becaufe they found there two human victims recently facrificed, and upon demanding, by means of figns, the reason of fuch barbarity, the Indians pointing towards the country of the weft, answered *Acolhua, Acolhua*, meaning to be underftood, that they did it by order of the Mexicans; as all the inhabitants of the Mexican vale were called Acolhuas by the people at a diftance from the capital. On this little ifland there is at prefent a good fortrefs to defend the entry into the port of *Vera Cruz*.

country ; for there prevailed among those nations, as we have already mentioned, an ancient tradition, that such a deity, after having, by his beneficence and innocence of life, acquired the esteem and veneration of the people in Tollan, Cholula, and Onohualco, had disappeared to them, promising to return after a certain period, to govern them in peace, and render them happy. The kings of those countries considered themselves the viceroys of that god, and trustees of the crown, which they were to cede to him whenever he made his appearance. This immemorial tradition, a variety of marks observed by them in the Spaniards conforming with those which their mythology ascribed to Quetzalcoatl, the surprising largeness of the vessels compared with their little skiffs and canoes, the loud noise and force of the artillery, resembling so strongly that of the clouds, all together awed and inspired them to believe it was the god of air who had arrived upon their coasts, with all the apparatus of thunder, lightning, and divinity. Moved by this persuasion, Montezuma ordered five persons of his court to repair immediately to Chalchiuhcuecan, to make congratulations, in the name of him and the whole kingdom, to this supposed power of the air, on his happy arrival in that land, and to offer him in homage a large present ; but, before he dispatched them, he previously sent orders to the governors of the coasts, to place centinels on the high mountains of Nauhtlan, Quauhtla, Miçtlan, and Tochtlan, that they might observe the motions of the armament, and send speedy advice of every thing which happened to the court. The Mexican ambassadors were unable, in spite of their utmost expedition, to overtake the Spaniards, who, when they had finished their commerce on that coast, continued their course along shore,

as



as far as the river of Panama, from whence they returned to Cuba with ten thousand sequins in gold, part acquired in exchange for toys, part obtained in a present made to the commander by a lord of Onohualco.

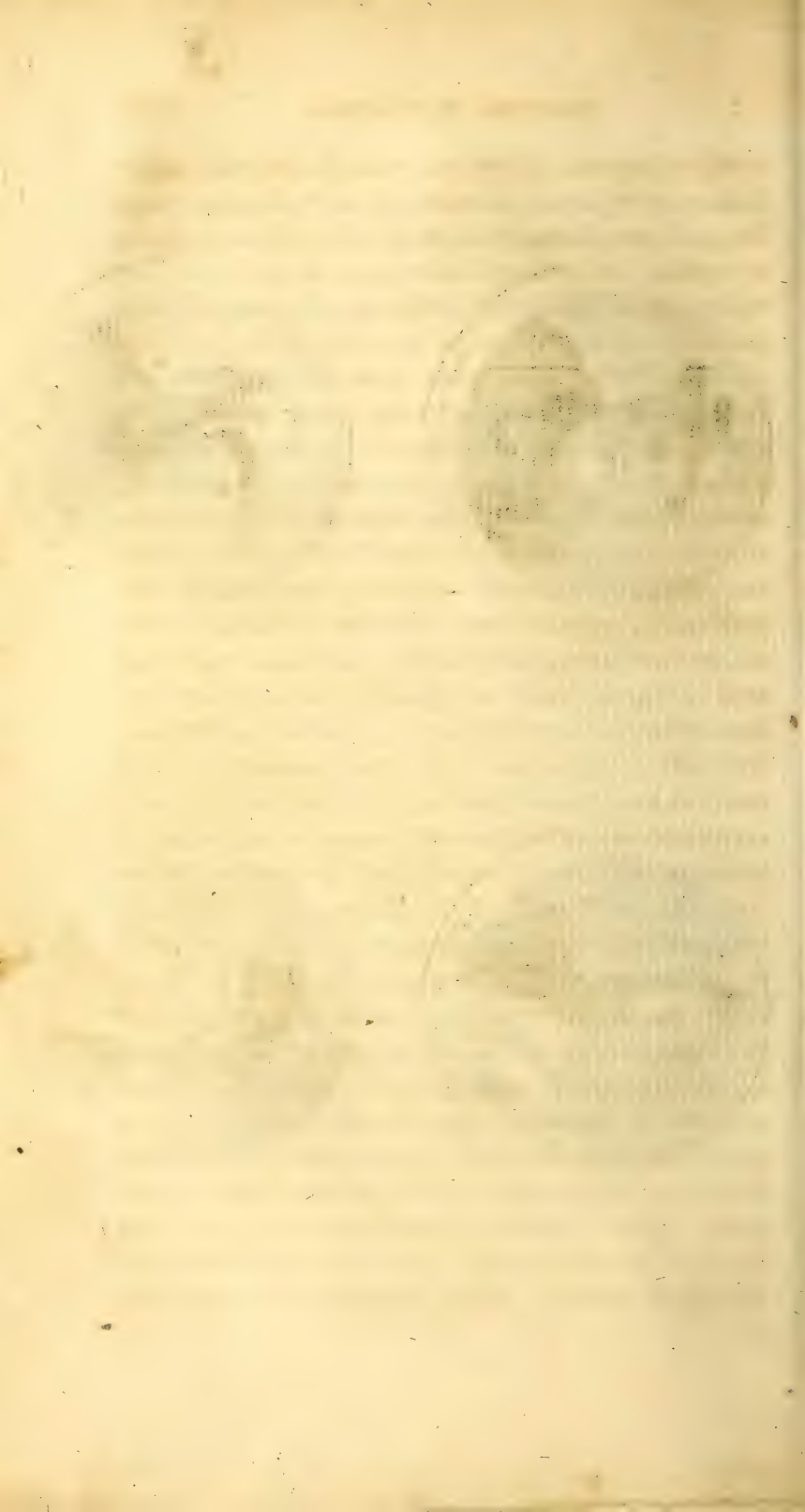
The governor of Cuba was much displeased that Grijalva did not plant a colony in that new country, which was represented by all to be the most rich and happy in the world. Upon this he immediately fitted out another larger armament, for the command of which several of the principal colonists of that island contended; but the governor, by the advice of his confidants, committed it to Ferdinand Cortes, a person of noble birth, and sufficiently rich to be able to support, with his own private capital, and the assistance of his friends, a considerable share of the expenses of the expedition. He was born in Medellin, a small city of Estremadura, in the year 1485. By the father he was *Cortes* and *Monroi*, and by his mother *Pizarro* and *Altamirano*, uniting in himself the blood of those four lineages, which were the most renowned and ancient of that city. At the age of fourteen, he was sent by his parents to Salamanca, in order that by learning the Latin tongue, and the civil law, at that famous university, he might become the support of his family which was reduced to poverty; but it was not long before his military genius diverted him from study, and led him to the New World, after the example of many illustrious youths of his nation. He accompanied Diego Velasquez, in the conquest of the island of Cuba, where he gained much wealth and acquired considerable authority. He was a man of great talents, discernment, and courage, dextrous in the use of arms, fruitful in expedients and resources to carry his projects into execution, and highly ingenious in making himself

self be obeyed and respected even by his equals ; great in his designs and actions, cautious in operations, modest in speech, steady in his enterprises, and patient in adversity. His zeal in religion was by no means inferior to his constant and inviolable fidelity to his sovereign ; but the splendor of those and other good qualities which placed him in the rank of heroes, was sullied and darkened by some actions unworthy of his greatness of soul. His immoderate love of the sex engaged him perpetually in criminal connections, and had formerly been attended with many difficulties and much danger. His too great ardour, or rather obstinacy, in enterprises, and the fear of frustrating his hopes of fortune, made him sometimes wanting in justice, gratitude, and humanity ; but, perhaps, there never was a general and conqueror, brought up in the school of the world, in whom the virtues were not foiled by his vices. Cortes was of a good stature and well proportioned, robust and active. His chest was rather prominent, his beard black, and his eyes sparkling and amorous. Such is the portrait of the famous conqueror of Mexico, which the first historians who knew him have left us.

As soon as he found himself honoured with the post of general of the expedition, he used the utmost diligence in preparing for the voyage, and began to assume the style of a great lord, both in his carriage and in his attendants ; fully sensible of the influence such a conduct has in dazzling the vulgar, and creating authority. He immediately erected the royal standard before his house, and published a proclamation through the island to enlist soldiers. Men, the most conspicuous of all that country, both in rank and office, were emulous to put themselves under his command, namely, Alonzo Hernandez de







de Portocarrero, cousin of the count de Medellin, Juan Velasquez de Leon, a near relation to the governor, Diego Ordaz, Francisco de Montejo, Francisco de Lugo, and others, whom we shall name in the course of our history. Amongst all these, Pedro de Alvarado de Badajoz, Christoval de Olid de Baeza, in Andalusia, and Gonzales de Sandoval de Medellin, merit particular mention, as they were the first commanders of the troops employed in that conquest, and those who made the most distinguished figure: all three warriors, extremely courageous, enured to the fatigues of war, and skilled in the military art, though otherwise different in character. *Alvarado* was a young man of handsome shape, and extreme agility, fair, graceful, lively, popular, addicted to luxuries and pleasures, greedy of gold, of which he stood in need to support his love of grandeur, and, as some authors affirm, unscrupulous how he obtained it, inhumane and violent in his conduct in some expeditions. *Olid* was stout-limbed, dark, and double. Both of them were very serviceable to Cortes in the conquest; but they proved ungrateful to him afterwards, and met with a tragical end. *Alvarado* died in New Galicia, killed by a horse which tumbled from a precipice. *Olid* was beheaded by his enemies in the square or market-place of Naco, in the province of Honduras. *Sandoval*, a youth of a good family, was scarcely twenty-two when he enlisted in the expedition of his countryman Cortes. He was well-shaped, manly in stature, and of a robust complexion, his hair was of a chestnut colour and curly, his voice strong and thick; a person of few words but excellent deeds. Cortes sent him on the most difficult and dangerous expeditions, in all of which he came off with success and with honor. In the war against the Mexicans, he

he headed a part of the Spanish army, and at the siege of the capital, he had more than thirty thousand men under his command, continually enjoying from his good conduct the favour of the general, the respect of the soldiers, and even the love of his enemies. He founded the colony of Medellin, on the coast of Chalchiuhcuecan, and that of Spirito Santo, on the river Coatzacoalco. He was commander of the garrison of Vera Cruz, and some time governor of Mexico; and in all his employments his equity was conspicuous. He was constant and assiduous in labour, obedient and faithful to his general, kind to the soldiers, humane (c) to his enemies, and entirely free from the prevailing contagion of avarice. In short, in all the series of conquerors, we do not find a more accomplished or praise-worthy character, as there was

(c) Dr. Robertson accuses Sandoval of that horrid example of severity made of the *Panuchese*, where the Spaniards burned sixty lords and four hundred nobles, under the eyes of their children and kindred, and cites the testimony of Cortes and Gomara; but Cortes neither affirms that Sandoval executed that punishment, nor even names it. Bernal Diaz, whose authority in this point is more to be depended on than Gomara, says, that Sandoval after he had conquered the *Panuchese*, and taken twenty lords, and some other persons of note prisoners, wrote to Cortes to know his determination with respect to them; and Cortes, in order to make their condemnation more justifiable, submitted the process to Diego de Ocampo, judge of that province, who, after having heard their confession, sentenced them to be burned, which judgment was executed. Bernal Diaz does not express the number of those who were condemned; Cortes says, that including lords and other principal persons, four hundred were burned. Such a sentence was no doubt cruel and severe; but Robertson, who casts many reproaches on the Spaniards, ought to have evinced his impartiality by declaring the motives which they had to act so violently against the *Panuchese*. The latter having subjected themselves to the crown of Spain, renounced their obedience, and, running to arms, disturbed that whole province; they killed four hundred Spaniards, forty of whom they burned alive and eat the others. Such atrocious doings are not sufficient to excuse the Spaniards, but they certainly extenuate the severity of their conduct. Robertson read equally in Gomara of the rebellious deeds of the *Panuchese*, and the rigour of the Spaniards, but he conceals the former and exaggerates the latter.



was no one among them who knew so well how to unite prudence and discretion with the ardour of youth, bravery and intrepidity with humanity, modesty with merit, and humility with success. He died in the flower of his age at a place of Andalusia, on his way to the court of Spain with Cortes.

As soon as all the preparations for the voyage were made, the governor of Cuba, from the suggestions and insinuations of the rivals of Cortes, recalled his commission, and ordered him to be imprisoned ; but those who were charged with his apprehension had not courage to attempt it, from seeing so many respectable and brave men united to support the part of their new general ; so that Cortes who had not only spent all his own capital in preparations, but also contracted large debts, retained his post in spite of his enemies ; and having all things in order and readiness, weighed anchor from the port of Ajaruco upon the 10th of February, 1519. The armament consisted of eleven vessels, five hundred and eight soldiers, divided into eleven companies, one hundred and nine seamen, sixteen horses, ten pieces of cannon, and four falconets. They steered under the direction of the pilot Alaminos, to the island of Cozumel, where they recovered Jerom de Aguilar, a Spanish dean, who, going from Darien to the island of Hispaniola a few years before, had been shipwrecked on the coast of Yucatan, and was made a slave to the Indians. Hearing of the arrival of the Spaniards at Cozumel, he obtained liberty from his master, and joined the fleet. From long commerce with the Yucatanese, he had learned the Maja language which is spoken there, on which account he obtained the office of interpreter to Cortes.

From Cozumel they proceeded along the coast of the peninsula of Yucatan to the river Chiapa, in the province of Tabasco, by which they advanced into the country, in barges and the smallest vessels, until they reached a grove of palm-trees, where they landed under pretence of wanting water and provisions, directed their course to a large village, which was not quite two miles distance, combating all the way with a crowd of Indians, who annoyed their progress with arrows, darts, and other offensive weapons, and forcing through the palisades which they had placed for their defence. The Spaniards having made themselves masters of the village, made frequent excursions among the neighbouring places, in which they had many dangerous skirmishes, until at last there happened a decisive engagement on the 25th day of March. The battle was fought on the plains of Ceutla, a village but a little distance from the other. The army of the enemy was much superior in number ; but in spite of their multitude they were entirely defeated, on account of the superior discipline of the Spaniards, the advantage of their arms, and the terror struck into the Indians by the size and fire of their horses. Eight hundred of the enemy remained dead upon the field. Of the Spaniards, one was killed, and more than sixty wounded. This victory was the beginning of the success of the Spaniards, in memory of which they founded a small city there, which they named *Madonna della Vittoria* (d), and was afterwards, for a long time the capital of that province. They endeavoured to justify their

(d) The city of Vittoria was depopulated entirely about the middle of the last century, on account of the frequent invasions of the English. Another small city was afterwards founded at a greater distance from the court, which they called *Villahermosa* ; but the capital of this province, where the governor resides, is *Tlacotalpan*.

their hostilities by the repeated protestations which they made to the natives before they came to any engagement, that they were not come into their country to do them any injury as enemies, but solely as navigators necessitated to procure, by the exchange of their merchandizes, the provisions which they required to continue their voyage ; to which protests, the Indians answered with a shower of arrows and darts. Cortes took solemn possession of that country in the name of his sovereign, with a strange ceremony, though agreeable to the cavalier customs and ideas of that century. He put on his shield, unsheathed his sword, and gave three stabs with it to a large tree which was in the principal village, declaring, that if any person durst oppose his possession, he would defend it with that sword.

To confirm more formally the dominion of his king, he assembled the lords of that province, and persuaded them to render him obedience, and to acknowledge him as their lawful sovereign; and to impress them with an elevated idea of the power of his king, he made before them a discharge of the artillery, and by artifices imposed upon them the belief, that the neighing of the horses was a mark of their indignation at the enemies of the Spaniards. They all appeared to acquiesce in the proposals of the conqueror, and listened with wonder and pleasure to hear the first truths of the Christian religion, which Bartolomeo de Olmedo, a learned divine, and chaplain to the expedition, declared to them by the interpreter Aguilar. They presented afterwards to Cortes, in token of their submission, some little articles of gold, several garments of coarse linen, as they made use of no others in that province, and twenty female slaves, which were divided among the officers of his troops.

Among



Among these was a young girl of noble birth, beauty, quick genius, and great spirit, a native of Painalla, a village of the Mexican province of Coatzacualco (*e*). Her father had been a feudatory of the crown of Mexico, and lord of several places. Her mother having been left a widow, married another noble, by whom she had a son. The love which they bore to this fruit of their marriage, induced them to pretend the death of their first-born child, that the inheritance might fall wholly to the last. To make it appear credible, they delivered her up privately to some merchants of Xicallanco, a city situated upon the borders of Tabasco, at a time when the daughter of one of their slaves had died, for whose death they made as much mourning as if it had been the death of their own. These merchants gave her away, or sold her to their neighbours of Tabasco, who, lastly, presented her to Cortes, unsuspecting that that singular slave should contribute by her speech to the conquest of all that land. Besides the native language of her own country, she understood the Maja language which was spoken in Yucatan and Tabasco, and in a little time she learned the Spanish. Instructed readily in the tenets of the Christian religion, she was solemnly baptised with  
other

(*e*) In a manuscript history, which was in the library of the college of St. Peter and St. Paul of the Jesuits of Mexico, it is said, that D. Marina was born in Huilotla, a village of Coatzacualco. Gomara, who is copied by Herrera and Torquemada, says, she was a native of Xalixco, and taken from thence by some merchants of Xicallanco, and carried to their country; but this is most probably false; as Xalixco is more than nine hundred miles distant from Xicallanco, and it is not known that there was any commerce between these two provinces so remote from each other. Bernal Diaz, who lived a long time in Coatzacualco, and knew the mother and brother of Marina, confirms the truth of our account, and avers to have heard it from Marina herself. A tradition also, which is still preserved in Coatzacualco, conforms to what we have said.

other slaves by the name of Marina (*f*). She was always faithful to the Spaniards, and her services to them can never be over-rated; as she was not only the instrument of their negotiations with the Mexicans, the Tlascalans, and the other nations of Anahuac, but frequently saved their lives, by warning them of dangers, and pointing out the means of escaping them. She accompanied Cortes in all his expeditions, serving sometimes as an interpreter, sometimes as a counsellor, and sometimes to her misfortune as a mistress. The son which she had by that conqueror, who was called Don Martin Cortes, knight of the military order of St. Jago, on account of some ill-grounded suspicions of rebellion, was put to the torture in Mexico, in the year 1568; his iniquitous and barbarous judges paying no regard to the memory of the unequalled services rendered by the parents of that illustrious sufferer to the Catholic king and all the Spanish nation (*g*). After the conquest she was married to a respectable Spaniard, named Juan de Xaramillo. During the long and hazardous voyage which she made in company with Cortes to the province of Honduras, in 1524, she had occasion in passing through her native country to see her mother and her brother, who presented themselves before her, bathed in tears and covered with confusion, as they dreaded that from her being in power and prosperity, under the protection of the Spaniards,

(*f*) The Mexicans adapt the name Marina to their language, and say *Malintzin*, whence came the name *Malinchi*, by which she is known among the Spaniards of Mexico.

(*g*) Those who gave the torture to Don Martin Cortes, and put the marquis of the Vale, his brother, in prison, were two formidable judges sent to Mexico by Philip II. The chief of those judges called *Mugnoz*, made such barbarous decisions, that the king being moved by the complaints of the Mexicans against him, recalled him to the court, and gave him so severe and so harsh a reprimand, that he grew melancholy and died.

niards, she would revenge the wrongs which had been done to her in her infancy; but she received and caressed them with great affection, from the naturally generous disposition of her temper, which equalled the other excellent talents she possessed. We have thought proper not to omit those incidents of a woman who was the first Christian of the Mexican empire, who makes so distinguished a figure in the history of the conquest, and whose name has been and is still so celebrated, not less among the Mexicans than the Spaniards.

Cortes having made himself secure of the tranquillity of Tabasco, and perceiving that it was not the country to yield gold, resolved to prosecute his voyage and seek for a region more rich than it; but as the festival of the palms drew near, he was desirous of giving the natives of Tabasco some idea of the solemnity of the Christian religion. That day mass was celebrated with all the possible forms of sacred duty; the branches were blessed, and a solemn procession, with martial music, was made, at all which the Indians were present, and listened with astonishment and awe.

This function being performed, and leave taken of the lords of Tabasco, the armament put to sea, and steering to the westward, after coasting along the province of Coatzacoalco, and crossing the mouth of the river Papaloapan, it entered the port of St. Juan de Ulua, on Holy Thursday, the 21st of April. They had hardly cast anchor, when they saw from the shore of Chalchiuhcucan two large canoes rowing towards their admiral, in which were many Mexicans sent by the governor of that coast, to know who they were who had arrived in that new armament, and what they wanted, and to offer them all the assistance which they required for



for the prosecution of their voyage: a piece of attention which shewed the vigilance and hospitality of that nation. Having come on board of the commander's ship, and presented themselves to Cortes in forms of civility, they explained their commission by means of Donna Marina and Aguilar, as from her not understanding the Spanish, nor he the Mexican, it was necessary at these first conferences with the Mexicans, to employ three languages and two interpreters. Donna Marina explained to Aguilar in the Maja tongue what the Mexicans said to her in their language, and Aguilar repeated it in Spanish to Cortes. This general courteously received the Mexicans, and knowing how acceptable the European toys had been to them the year before, answered, that he had come into that country for no other purpose than to traffick with them, and to treat with their king about some affairs of the utmost importance, and in order to conciliate their favour, he made them taste some Spanish wine, and presented them with some small trifles which he judged would be worthy their acknowledgment (*b*).

On

(*b*) Torquemada says, that Montezuma having been apprised of the new armament which his centinels, who were placed on the mountains, had observed, immediately dispatched his ambassadors to pay worship to the imagined god Quetzalcoatl; they proceeding with the utmost expedition to the port of Chalcihucuecan, went instantly on board of the admiral, on the very day of the arrival of the Spaniards; that Cortes, attending to their error and willing to profit by it, received them sitting upon a high throne that had hastily been formed, where he suffered himself to be adored, to be clothed in the sacerdotal habit of Quetzalcoatl, a necklace of gems to be put about his neck, and a helmet or vizor of gold, set with gems, to be put on his head, &c. but this is unquestionably false. The fleet departed from the river of Tabasco on Holy Monday, and arrived on Thursday at the port of Ulua. The mountains of Tochtilan and Mictlan, from whence the fleet could most quickly be discovered, are not less than three hundred miles distant from the capital, nor are they less than two hundred from the port of Ulua: so that had it even been possible to have descried the fleet the very day on which it left Tabasco, it was impossible

On the first day of Easter, after the Spaniards had landed, and disembarked their cavalry and artillery, and had, with the assistance of the Mexicans, made barracks of the branches of trees upon that sandy shore, where at present stands the city of new Vera Cruz, two Mexican governors of that coast, named Teuhtlile and Cuitlalpitoc (*i*), arrived there with a great retinue of attendants. Ceremonies of civility and respect being exchanged on both sides, before any conference took place, Cortes, not less for the sake of prospering his future designs, than of giving that idolatrous nation some idea of the Christian religion, ordered that mass should be celebrated in their presence. On this occasion, therefore, it was sung with all possible solemnity for the first time in the dominions of Mexico.

He invited them afterwards to dine with him and his officers, in order to obtain their good will towards him by courtesies. As soon as they rose from table, he led them aside to communicate his pretensions to them. He told them that he was a subject of Don Carlos of Austria, the greatest king of the East, whose bounty, grandeur, and power, he extolled with most magnificent praises; and added, that this great monarch knowing of that land, and of the lord who reigned there, sent him to make him a visit in his name, and to communicate to him in person some affairs of great importance; and that therefore he would be glad to know

impossible for the ambassadors to have arrived there on Thursday. Besides, there is no memory of such an event in any author, it rather appears from the account of Bernal Diaz to be totally false, and that the Mexicans were now sensible of their error into which they had been led by the first fleet which had appeared there.

(*i*) Bernal Diaz writes *Tendili* instead of Teuhtlile, and *Pitalpitoe* in place of Cuitlalpitoc. Herrera calls it *Pitalpitoe*, and Solis, and Robertson, who thought to amend it, *Pilpatoc*.

know when it would please their lord to hear his embassy. "You are scarcely arrived in this land," answered Teuhtlile, "and yet you desire immediately to see our king. I have listened with pleasure to what you have told me concerning the grandeur and bounty of your sovereign; but know, that our king is not less bountiful and great; I rather wonder that there should exist another in the world more powerful than he; but as you assert it, I will make it known to my sovereign, from whose goodness I trust, that he will not only have pleasure in receiving intelligence of that great prince, but will likewise do honour to his ambassador. Accept, in the mean time, this present which I offer you in his name." Upon which taking out from a *petlacalli*, or little basket of woven reeds, several admirable pieces of workmanship of gold, he presented them to Cortes, with various works of feathers, ten loads of garments of fine cotton, and a considerable quantity of provisions (*k*).

Cortes accepted the present with singular demonstrations of gratitude, and returned for them things of small value, though equally prized by them, either because they were entirely new in that country, or from the brilliancy of their appearance. Teuhtlile had brought many painters with him, in order that by dividing the objects among them of which the armament consisted, they might in a short time copy them all; and that their

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king

(*k*) Solis and Robertson make Teuhtlile general of the armies, and deprive him of the civil government of that coast, whereas we know the contrary from Bernal Diaz, Gomara, and other ancient historians. Those authors say besides, that in the beginning Teuhtlile opposed Cortes in his design of going to the court, but it appears from the testimony of ancient and better historians, he did not oppose him until he had a positive order from his king to that purpose.



king might have the pleasure of beholding, with his own eyes, all the wonders which they had to relate to him. Cortes perceiving their intention, in order to furnish their painters with a subject capable of making a grander impression on the mind of their king, commanded his cavalry to muster on the beach, and go through some military evolutions, and the artillery to be discharged in a volley. Both orders were observed, and the exhibition attended to with all the stupor and amazement imaginable by the two governors, their numerous retinue, and crowd of followers, which, as Gomara affirms, consisted of more than four thousand Indians. Teuhtlile took notice of a gilded visor, or mask, which, from its resemblance to that belonging to one of the principal idols of Mexico, he demanded from Cortes that they might shew it to their king; and Cortes granted it, on condition of having it returned to him full of gold dust, under a pretence that he desired to see whether the gold, which was dug from the mines of Mexico, was the same as that of his native country (*1*).

As soon as the paintings were finished, Teuhtlile took a friendly leave of Cortes, proposing to return in a few days with the answer of his sovereign, and deputing Cuitlalpiloc in his place, that he might provide the Spaniards with every thing necessary, he departed for Cuitlactlan, the place of his usual residence: from whence he carried in person the intelligence, the paintings, and present from the Spanish general, as Bernal Diaz and Torquemada affirm; or he sent them all, as  
Solis

(1) Some historians say, that Cortes in demanding the visor to be filled with gold, pretended that he and his companions suffered a certain disease of the heart, which, they said, could not be cured by any other remedy than this precious metal, but that imports little as to the substance of the fact.

Solis conjectures, by the posts, or couriers, who were stationed on the highways, always ready to run with despatches.

It is easy to imagine the uneasiness and perplexity into which Montezuma was thrown by the news of that armament, and the distinct information he had of the character of those strangers, the fire of their horses, and the destructive violence of their arms. As he was eminently superstitious, he made his gods be consulted with respect to their pretensions, and he received for answer, as is reported, that he ought never to admit that new people into his court. Whether this oracle, as some authors are persuaded, came from the devil, who delivered it, in order to keep every path shut to the gospel, or as we apprehend from the priests, for the common benefit of themselves and the nation, Montezuma resolved from that time to refuse admission to the Spaniards; but that he might appear to act with propriety, and to follow the dictates of his own genius, he sent an embassy to them with a present entirely worthy of his royal magnificence. The ambassador was a great personage of the court, not a little similar in stature and shape to the Spanish general, as an eye-witness has reported (*m*). Seven days were hardly elapsed after the departure of Teuhtlile, before he returned, accompanying the ambassador, conducting also more than an hundred men of burden, who carried the present (*n*). As  
soon

(*m*) Bernal Diaz.

(*n*) Bernal Diaz calls this ambassador *Quintalbor*, but such a name neither is nor can be Mexican. Robertson says, that the same officers who had hitherto treated with Cortes, were charged to bear the royal answer to him, and makes no mention of the ambassador; but both Bernal Diaz, an eye-witness, and other Spanish and Indian historians, affirm what we have said. Solis, in consideration of the short interval of seven days, and the distance of seventy leagues,  
between

soon as the ambassador was come into the presence of Cortes, he touched the earth with his hand, and then lifted it to his mouth, according to the custom of those nations, offered (*o*) incense to the general and other officers who were beside him, saluted them respectfully, and sitting down upon a seat which Cortes placed for him, pronounced his harangue, which was a congratulation to that general, in the name of his king, upon his happy arrival in that country; an intimation of the pleasure he had received in knowing that men so gallant and brave had landed in his kingdom, and in hearing the news which they had brought from so great a monarch; and to express how acceptable his gift had been: upon which, in token of his royal pleasure he had sent him that present. Having said this, he made some fine mats and cotton cloths be spread upon the ground, upon which were placed in order and form the whole substance of the present. It consisted of various works of gold and silver, still more valuable on account of the wonderful workmanship than of those precious metals, among which some were gems admirably set, and others figures of lions, tygers, apes, and other animals; of thirty loads or bales of the very finest cotton, of various colours, and in part interwoven with the most beautiful feathers;

between that port and the capital, could not be persuaded that an ambassador came at that time; but having said a little before, that the Mexican posts were more diligent than the European posts, it is not wonderful that in one day, or a little more, they should have carried intelligence of the fleet to the court, and the ambassador should have come in four or five days after in a litter, borne on the shoulders of the same posts, as was the custom among those people. As the fact is not improbable, we ought rather to believe Bernal Diaz, who was an eye-witness.

(*o*) The offering of incense to the Spaniards, although it was merely a piece of civil courtesy, and the name *Teteuēin* (lords or gentlemen), by which they are addressed, being somewhat similar to that of *Teteo* (gods), made them believe that they were imagined to be gods by the Mexicans.



feathers; of several excellent works of feathers, embellished with many little figures of gold; and a visor full of gold in dust, as Cortes desired, valued at fifteen hundred sequins: but the most valuable things of the whole were two wheels, the one of gold, the other of silver; that of gold, representing, as we have said already, the Mexican century, had the image of the sun engraved in the middle, round which were different figures in bas-relief. The circumference of it was thirty palms of Toledo, and the value of it ten thousand sequins (*p*). The one of silver, in which the Mexican year was represented, was still larger, with a moon in the middle, surrounded also with figures in bas-relief. The Spaniards were not less amazed than pleased with the view of such riches. "This present," added the ambassador, addressing himself to Cortes, "my sovereign sends for you and your companions; as for your king, he will in a short time send some jewels of inestimable value. In the mean while, you may remain upon this shore as long as it may be agreeable, to repose after the fatigues of so long a voyage, and to provide yourselves with necessaries to return to your native country. If you desire any other thing of this country for your sovereign, it shall be given you immediately; but with respect to your demand of visiting our court, I am charged to dissuade you from so difficult and hazardous a journey, as the way to it lies through uninhabited deserts, and the countries of enemies." Cortes received the present with the most particular expressions of gratitude for the royal beneficence, and made

(*p*) There is a great difference among authors respecting the value of the plate; but we give more faith to Bernal Diaz who knew it well, than to one who was to have his share in the present from Montezuma.

made the best returns to it in his power; but without abandoning his request, he begged of the ambassador to represent to the king the dangers and distresses which they had suffered in their navigation, and the displeasure which his sovereign would feel when he found his hopes frustrated; that besides, neither dangers nor fatigues were sufficient to divert the Spaniards from their undertakings. The ambassador agreed to make this report to the king, and politely took leave of Cortes along with Teuhtlile; Cuitlalpiloc being left behind with a vast number of people, in a hamlet which they had formed of small huts, at a little distance from the camp of the Spaniards.

Cortes, in the midst of all that prosperity which he had hitherto met with, perceived that he could not long remain at that station; for besides the inconvenience of heat and insects, which swarm upon that shore, he was apprehensive of some damage to his ships from the north wind, to which that harbour is exposed; on which account he despatched two vessels, under the command of Montejo, to coast along the shore, towards Panuco, and find another more secure port. They returned in a few days with the intelligence of having found, thirty-six miles from Ulua, a sufficient harbour, near to a city placed in a strong situation.

In the mean time, Teuhtlile returned to the camp of the Spaniards, and after taking Cortes aside with the interpreters, he told him, that his lord Montezuma gratefully accepted the new present which he had sent him; and that that which he had sent on his part now was destined for the great king of Spain; that he wished him all sort of happiness, but that he desired no more messages to be sent to him, nor to hear any farther propositions  
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of a visit to his court. The present for the Catholic king consisted of various works of gold, which were estimated to be worth fifteen hundred sequins, ten bales of most curious robes of feathers, and of four gems, so highly valued by the Mexicans, that, according to what Teuhtlile himself affirmed, each was worth a load of gold. That undiscerning king flattered himself that he should induce the Spaniards by his liberality to abandon that country, and did not reflect that the love of gold is a passion which grows by what it feeds on. Cortes was mortified with the refusal of the king ; but he did not give up his intention, the native constancy of his temper being strengthened by the alluring prospect of riches.

Teuhtlile, before he departed, observed, that the Spaniards on hearing the stroke of the bell for Ave Mary, kneeled down before a holy cross, and in wonder at it, asked why they adored that piece of wood. Upon this Olmedo took occasion to explain to him the first articles of the Christian religion, and represented to him the abomination of worshipping idols, and the inhumanity of their sacrifices. But his discourse was not comprehended, and the attempt proved fruitless.

The following day the Spaniards found themselves so deserted by the Mexicans, that there was not one to be seen on all the coast ; this was unquestionably the effect of the order given by their king to recall all the people with the provisions destined for those strangers, if they persisted in their daring resolution. A novelty of this kind caused a sudden consternation among the Spaniards, as they dreaded every moment the whole power of that vast empire might pour down upon their miserable camp. Upon which, Cortes made their provisions be secured in the ships, and ordered his troops to be armed for their de-



defence. It is certain that Montezuma, upon this as well as on many other occasions, might easily have totally destroyed those few strangers who were to bring so many misfortunes upon him ; but Providence preserved them to become the instruments of his views in that new world. We do not mean to justify the design and conduct of the conquerors, but neither can we avoid tracing in the series of the conquest the destiny which prepared the ruin of that empire.

On the same day, during this state of suspense of the Spaniards, two soldiers who kept guard without the camp, saw five men coming towards them, different in some degree from the Mexicans in their dress and in their ornaments, who upon being conducted to the Spanish general, said in Mexican, as their own language was not understood, that they were of the nation of the Totanacas, and sent by the lord of Chempoalla, a city twenty-four miles distant from that place, to pay his respects to them, to know who they were and whence they came, and to request them to repair to that city, where they would be kindly received ; adding, that they had not approached the camp sooner for fear of the Mexicans. The lord of Chempoalla was one of those feudatories, who lived impatient under the Mexican yoke. Having heard of the victory obtained by the Spaniards in Tabasco, and their arrival at that port, he thought the occasion the most favourable to throw off the Mexican yoke, with the assistance of such brave people. Cortes, who wished for nothing more earnestly than such an alliance, after informing himself sufficiently of the state and condition of the Totonacas, and the wrongs they suffered from the great power of the Mexicans, answered, with  
thanks

thanks to the Chempoallese chief for his courtesy, and a promise to visit him without delay.

He immediately published his departure for Chempoalla ; but before that, it was necessary to overcome some obstacles to it, which his own soldiers threw in the way. Some adherents to the governor of Cuba, tired out with the hardships which they suffered, intimidated by the dangers which now presented themselves, and become desirous of repose, and longing for the conveniences and comforts of their homes, most earnestly conjured the general to return to Cuba, exaggerating the scarcity of their provisions, and the rashness of so great an undertaking, as to oppose, with so small a number of soldiers, the vast power of the king of Mexico ; especially, after they had lost on those sands thirty-five men, part of those by the wounds received in the battle of Tabasco, part from the unwholesomeness of the air of that shore. Cortes, by means of presents and promises, and also by means of a little severity opportunely exerted, and other arts suggested to him by his fertility of genius, so well managed his corps, that he not only pacified the discontented, and induced them to remain willingly in that country ; but, proceeding farther in his negotiations, brought it about that the army, in the name of the king, and without any dependance on the governor of Cuba, should confirm him in the supreme civil and military command ; and that on account of the expenses already, and hereafter to be laid out by him upon the armament, a fifth part of the gold which might be acquired should be assigned to him ; after the share belonging to their king was deducted. He also created magistrates, and appointed all other officers proper for a colony, which he intended to plant on that coast.

Having furmounted these difficulties, and taken suitable measures for the execution of his great designs, he began his march with the troops. His intention was not only to recruit the strength of his fatigued people, who had suffered from that unhealthy shore, and to seek new alliances, but likewise to choose a good situation for the foundation of the colony, as Chempoalla was upon the way to Chiahuitztla (*q*), the new harbour discovered by Montejo. The little army marched with a part of the artillery towards Chempoalla in cautious order, well prepared to defend itself, if they should chance to be attacked either by the Totonacas, of whose sincerity they were not perfectly secure, or by the Mexicans whom they supposed they had offended by their resolution; a caution which no good general ever thought superfluous, and which was never neglected by Cortes in times of the greatest prosperity, always of use to maintain military discipline, and in general necessary for security. The ships proceeded along shore to the port of Chiahuitztla.

When they arrived within three miles of Chempoalla, twenty respectable Chempoallese inhabitants came out to meet the army, and presented to Cortes a refreshment of ananas, and other fruits, in the name of their lord, and made his excuse that he had not come in person to meet him, as he was prevented from doing so. They entered the city, in the order of battle, being suspicious of some treachery from the inhabitants. A light horseman having advanced as far as the greater square of the city, and seeing a bastion of the palace of that lord, which, on account of its having been fresh whitened and well

(*q*) Solis and Robertson give to Chiahuitztla the name of *Quiabiflan*, which neither is nor can be Mexican.



well polished, made a bright reflexion of the sun, he imagined it was silver, and returned full speed to acquaint the general of it. This incident is sufficient to shew, how much the mind may be deceived and deluded by the predominance of any particular passion. The Spaniards proceeded through the streets, not less delighted than amazed at seeing such a city, the largest which they had seen in the New World, so full of inhabitants and beautiful gardens. Some, on account of its largeness, called it *Seville*, and others *Villaviciosa*, on account of its pleasantness (*r*).

When they arrived at the greater temple, the lord of that state came to receive them at the entrance; though inactive on account of his immoderate fatness, he was a person of discernment and some genius. After having saluted according to the custom of that country, and offered incense to the general, he took leave, promising to return as soon as they had reposed after the fatigues of their journey. The whole Spanish troop were lodged in large handsome buildings, within the enclosure of the temple, which were either built on purpose for the accommodation of strangers, or destined for the habitation of the ministers of the idols. Here they were well entertained, and provided with every thing they wanted at the expense of that lord, who returned to them after dinner, in a portable chair or litter,

(*r*) We cannot doubt of the ancient greatness of Chempoalla, considering the testimony of authors who saw it, and the extent of its ruins. It is impossible to conclude any thing about it, from the account given by Torquemada, as in one place he makes the inhabitants amount to twenty or thirty thousand, in another place to fifty thousand one hundred and eleven, and in the Index to Vol. I. to an hundred and fifty thousand. To Chempoalla the same thing occurred which happened to all the other cities of the New World, that is, that with diseases, and the vexations of the sixteenth century, it gradually dwindled until at last it was entirely depopulated.

ter, accompanied by a number of nobility. In the secret conference which he had with him, Cortes, by means of his interpreters, boasted the grandeur and power of his sovereign, by whom he was sent into that country, and charged with several commissions of the utmost importance, and amongst others, an injunction to succour and relieve oppressed innocence. "If therefore," he added, "I can serve you in any thing with my person and my troops, name it to me, I will do it cheerfully." On hearing these proposals, the Chempoallese chief fetched a deep sigh, which was followed by a bitter complaint of the misfortunes of his nation. He told him, that the state of the Totonacas had, from time immemorial, been free, and governed by lords of their own nation; but within a few years since, had been oppressed with the rigorous yoke of the Mexicans, who, on the contrary, from a humble commencement, had raised themselves to such a pitch of grandeur, by a firm and steady alliance with the kings of Acolhuacan and Tlacopan; that they had rendered themselves masters of all that land; that their power was excessive, and their tyranny in proportion; that the king of Mexico engrossed to himself the gold of his subjects, and that the receivers of the tributes, besides other cruelties and oppression, demanded of the tributaries their sons for sacrifices, and their daughters for violation. Cortes appeared moved with compassion for his misfortunes, and offered to give him his assistance in every thing; deferring until another occasion to treat of the manner of doing it; as he was then pressed to go to Chiahuitzla to examine into the state of his vessels. At this visit the Chempoallese chief made him a present of some works of gold, which it is said were worth a thousand sequins.

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The next day four hundred men of burden presented themselves to Cortes, being sent to him by that lord to transport his baggage; and it was then he learned from donna Marina the custom which prevailed among those nations, to furnish of their own accord, without any motive of interest, such people of burden to every respectable person who passed through their city.

From Chempoalla, the Spaniards advanced to Chiahuitzla, a small city, situated upon a steep and rocky mountain, a little more than twelve miles from Chempoalla towards the north, and three from the new port. Here Cortes had another conference with the lord of that city, and the lord of Chempoalla, who, for this purpose, made himself be transported hither. At the same time that they were deliberating upon the means of releasing themselves from the Mexican yoke, there arrived at that city, with a great retinue, five noble Mexicans, the receivers of the royal tributes, who expressed the utmost indignation against the Totonacas, for having dared to receive these strangers without the royal consent; and demanded twenty human victims to sacrifice to their gods in expiation of their crime. The whole city was disturbed, and particularly the two lords, who considered themselves the most guilty. Cortes having learned from donna Marina the cause of their disquiet, found an extraordinary expedient to relieve them from their embarrassment. He suggested to the two lords the bold design of apprehending the royal receivers and putting them in prison; and though at first they refused to do so, from its appearing too rash and dangerous an attempt, they at last yielded to his entreaties. They accordingly imprisoned those five nobles, who had entered their city with so much pride and with so much disdain for  
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the Spaniards, that they had not even deigned to look at them as they passed by them.

The Totonacas had hardly taken this step, when, encouraged by it, they almost would have proceeded to sacrifice them that very night, had they not been dissuaded from it by Cortes, who having conciliated by that measure the love and respect of the Totonacas, intended to gain the good-will of the Mexicans by liberating the prisoners. His artful double conduct lays open his disposition; but it cannot be commended, except by those courtiers who know no other system than the art of deceit, and who, regardless of honour, pursue interest alone in their actions. Cortes gave orders therefore to his guards, to take at night two of the Mexicans out of the prison, and bring them secretly before him, so as they might not be observed by any of the inhabitants of the city. The order was obeyed, and the Mexicans found themselves so much obliged to the Spanish general, that they made him a thousand acknowledgments, and advised him not to trust to the barbarous and perfidious Totonacas. Cortes charged them to explain to their sovereign his great displeasure at the attempt of those mountaineers against his ministers; but as he had put them two at liberty, he would also set the others free. They departed immediately for the court, escorted by some Spaniards, in a vessel from thence to the borders of the province; and Cortes, the day after, pretended extreme anger at the guards through whose neglect the prisoners had escaped; and that the same accident might not happen again, he proposed to secure the others in a more close prison; and to make this be believed, he made them be conducted in chains aboard his vessels, from which he soon after set them at liberty like the first.

The

The report soon spread through all the mountains of the Totonacas, that they were relieved from the tribute which they paid to the king of Mexico, and that if there were any other receivers of the tributes there, they should let it be known immediately, that they might be seized. At the sound of this intelligence, the sweet hope of liberty revived in the whole nation, and several other lords came speedily to that city to thank their supposed deliverer, and deliberate upon measures to secure their liberty. Some persons, who had not yet banished from their minds the fear of the Mexicans, proposed that they should ask pardon of the king for the outrage committed upon his ministers; but from the suggestions of Cortes, and the lords of Chempoalla and Chiahuitztla, the opposite sentiment prevailed: it was resolved therefore to free themselves from the tyrannical dominions of the Mexicans, with the assistance of those brave strangers, by putting a formidable army under the command of the Spanish general.

Cortes, having sufficiently assured himself of the sincerity of the Totonacas, and informed himself of their force, seized this favourable moment to bring that numerous nation under obedience to the Catholic king. This act was celebrated in the presence of the notary of the army, and with every other legal solemnity.

This affair being happily concluded, Cortes took leave of those lords, to put another project in execution, of the greatest importance, which he had formed some time before; that was, to plant a strong colony on this coast, which should be a retreat for them in times of disaster, a fortress to hold the Totonacas to the fidelity which they had sworn to the Spaniards, a place of descent for the new troops which might arrive there either  
to

to their assistance from Spain, or the Antilles, and a magazine for the stores which might be sent to them by their countrymen, or which they might desire to send to Europe. This colony was founded therefore in the country of the Totonacas, in a plain which lies at the foot of the mountain of Chiahuitztla, twelve miles from Chempoalla towards the north, and adjoining to the new harbour (s). They called it *Villarica* (or rich city) of Vera Cruz, on account of the great appearance of riches they had seen there, and because they had disembarked them on Holy Friday; and this was the first colony of the Spaniards on the continent of North America. Cortes was the first who put a hand to the settlement, to encourage his people by his own example; and, in a short time, with the assistance of the Totonacas, they built a sufficient number of houses, and a small fortress capable of resisting the arms of the Mexicans.

In the mean time the two receivers, whom Cortes set first at liberty, had arrived at Mexico, and had informed the king of all that had happened, bestowing high praises on the Spanish general. Montezuma, who was preparing to send an army to chastise the insolence and temerity of those strangers, and drive them out of his dominions, became

(s) Almost all historians have committed a mistake concerning the founding of Vera Cruz; as they say the first colony of the Spaniards was *Antigua*, or the ancient settlement on the river of that name; and believe that there were only two places of that name, that is, ancient Vera Cruz and the new Vera Cruz, settled on the same sands where Cortes disembarked: but without doubt there have been three places of the name of Vera Cruz. The first settled in 1519, close to the port of Chiahuitztla, which retained afterwards only the name of *Villarica*; the second, the ancient Vera Cruz, settled in 1523 or 4; and the third, the New Vera Cruz, which still preserves the name of Vera Cruz, and was settled by order of the Count of Monterus, Viceroy of Mexico, towards the end of the 16th, or the beginning of the 17th century, and had from Philip III. the title of city given it in 1615.



became pacified with the intelligence, and feeling his obligations to the Spanish general for the service done to the royal ministers, sent two princes, his nephews, accompanied with a numerous retinue of nobility and others, with a present of works of gold worth upwards of a thousand sequins. They returned thanks in the name of the king to Cortes, and at the same time complained of him for having entered so far into friendship with the rebellious Totonacas, that that nation had had the insolence to refuse to pay the tribute which they owed to their sovereign. They added, that solely on account of such guests, an army had not been sent to punish the rebellion of those people, but that in the end they would not remain unchastised. Cortes, after having signified his gratitude in the most becoming expressions, endeavoured to vindicate himself from the accusation of friendship with the Totonacas, by the necessity he was under of seeking provisions for his troops, after he was abandoned by the Mexicans. He said also, that with respect to the tribute, it was impossible that a nation could serve two masters; that he hoped soon to be at court to satisfy the king more completely, and make him sensible of the sincerity of his conduct.

The two princes, after having beheld with great wonder and delight the military exercises of the Spanish cavalry, returned to the court. The lord of Chempoalla, who was extremely displeased with that embassy, in order to strengthen the alliance with the Spaniards, presented eight virgins richly dressed to Cortes, that they might marry with his officers; and amongst them was one of his nieces, which he designed for the general himself. Cortes, who had frequently discoursed with him on the subject of religion, told him, he could not accept them,

unless they should first renounce idolatry, and embrace Christianity; and upon this occasion explained to him anew the principles of the Christian religion, and reasoned with all his strength on the absurd worship of their false deities, and especially against the horrid cruelty of their sacrifices. To this warm expostulation the Chempoallese chief replied, that although they most highly valued his friendship, they could not however comply with his request, to abjure the worship of their gods, from whose hand they received health, plenty, and all the blessings they had, and from whose anger, when provoked by ingratitude, they must dread the severest punishment.

The military fire of Cortes was still more inflamed by this answer; upon which, turning to his soldiers, he said to them, "Come on, soldiers; what do we wait for? How can we suffer men, who pretend to be our friends, to pay that worship to statues and base images, which is due to the only true God? Courage, soldiers; now is the time to shew that we are Spaniards, and that we have inherited from our ancestors, an ardent zeal for our holy religion. Let us break the idols, and take from the sight of those infidels such vile incentives to their superstition. If we obtain that end, we will do our God the greatest possible service in our power. If we die in the attempt, eternal glory will recompense the sacrifice of our lives."

The Chempoallese chief, who from the countenance of Cortes, and the movements of his soldiers, clearly perceived their intention, made a sign to his people to prepare themselves for the defence of their gods. The Spaniards already began to ascend the stairs of the temple, when the Chempoallese chief, confused and enraged, cried

cried out to them to guard against that attempt, unless they desired that the vengeance of their gods should immediately pour down upon them. Cortes, incapable of being intimidated by their threats, answered, that he had already frequently admonished them to abandon their abominable superstition ; that since they had not chosen to take his counsel, which was so advantageous for them, he would no longer hold their friendship ; that if the Totonacas themselves were not resolved to take away those detestable images, he and his people would break them, and that they must guard cautiously against shewing any hostility towards the Spaniards, otherwise they would immediately charge upon them with such fury, that they would not leave a native alive among them. To these threats Marina added another more efficacious, which was, that if they opposed the intention of those strangers, instead of being allied with the Totonacas against the Mexicans, they would join the Mexicans in alliance against the Totonacas, and then their ruin would be inevitable. This motive diverted the chief from the first dictates of his zeal, and the fear of the Mexican arms prevailing over the fear of his gods, he told Cortes he might do as he pleased, for they had not courage themselves to put a sacrilegious hand to their images. The Spaniards no sooner obtained this permission, than fifty of the soldiers mounting rapidly into the temple, took up the idols from the altars, and threw them down the stairs. The Totonacas in the mean while shed a shower of tears, and covered their eyes that they might not see the sacrilege ; praying their gods at the same time, in a mournful voice, not to punish the nation for the temerity of those strangers, as they were unable to prevent it, without falling a sacrifice to the fury of the Mexicans. Nevertheless



theless some of them, either less timid and cowardly, or more jealous of the honour of their deities, disposed themselves to take revenge of the Spaniards, and would certainly have engaged with them, if the Spaniards, by seizing the lord of Chempoalla and four principal priests, had not compelled them to restrain the fury of their people.

After this daring act, where prudence was blinded by enthusiasm, Cortes commanded the priests to bring the fragments of the idols before him, and throw them into a fire. He was immediately obeyed; upon which, being full of joy and triumph, as if by breaking the idols, he had entirely banished idolatry and superstition from those people, he told their chief he was now willing to accept the eight virgins which had been offered him; that from that time he would consider the Totonacas as his friends and brothers, and in all their exigencies would assist them against their enemies; that as they could never more adore those detestable images of the demon their enemy, he would place in the same temple an image of the true mother of God, that they might worship and implore her protection in all their necessities. He then expatiated, in a long discourse, upon the sanctity of the Christian religion; after which he ordered the Chempoallese masons to cleanse the walls of the temples of those disgusting stains of human blood, which they preserved there as trophies of their religion, and to polish and whiten them. He caused an altar to be made after the mode of Christians, and placed the image of the most holy Mary there. He committed the care of this sanctuary to four Chempoallese priests, provided they should go always dressed in white, instead of that black melancholy habit which they wore in virtue of their former office.

office. In order that they might never want lights before that sacred image, he taught them the use of wax, which the bees wrought in their mountains; and that they might not in his absence replace the idols, or otherwise profane that sanctuary, he left one of his soldiers, named Juan Torres, behind, who, on account of his age, was of little service in war. The eight virgins, as soon as they were sufficiently instructed, received holy baptism.

From Chempoalla Cortes returned to the new colony of Vera-Cruz, where he had the good fortune to recruit his little army with two other officers and ten soldiers, who had landed there from Cuba; and a little time after he was joined by six other men, who had been taken by a vessel belonging to Jamaica.

Cortes, before he undertook the journey to Mexico, thought proper to transmit to his sovereign an account of all that had happened to him; and that the news might be more welcome, he sent at the same time all the gold which had been acquired by the armament, inducing all the soldiers and officers to yield up their shares for that purpose. In this letter Cortes aimed at prepossessing the king against the representations which might be made by the governor of Cuba. Two other letters were also written to the king, one subscribed by the magistrates of the new colony, the other by the principal officers of the expedition, in which they requested his acceptance and approbation of what they had done for him, and to confirm the offices of General and chief judge, already conferred by their suffrages, on Cortes, whom they recommended with the most warm praises. Those two letters, with the present of gold, were sent to Spain by the two captains Alonso Hernandez de Portocarrero and Francisco de Montejo, who set sail on the 16th of July, 1519.

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The two commissioners above mentioned were hardly departed when Cortes, who was continually revolving some great design in his mind, put a plan in execution, which alone would have been sufficient to have proved his magnanimity of soul, and immortalized his name. In order to deprive his soldiers of every means, and consequently of every hope of return to Cuba, and to reinforce his little army with all the sailors, after punishing two soldiers with death, who had treacherously conspired to fly off in one of the vessels, and inflicted a less rigorous chastisement on three of their accomplices, he prevailed by argument and entreaty on some of his confidants, and one of the pilots, in whom he placed the utmost trust, to pierce one or two of the vessels secretly, to persuade every one that they had foundered from being worm-eaten, and to make a report to him that the others were no longer fit for service on the same account, having lain three months close in port. Cortes availed himself of this deceit that his people might not conspire against him, finding himself reduced to the hard necessity to conquer or die. Every thing was done according to his command, and with the consent of all his people, after having brought the sails, cordage, and every thing else which could be of use on shore. “ Thus,” says Robertson, “ by an effort of magnanimity, to which there is “ nothing equal in history, five hundred men agreed of “ their own free-will to shut themselves up in an enemy’s “ country, full of powerful and unknown nations, deprived of every means of escape, having no other resource left than their perseverance and valour.” We do not doubt, that unless Cortes had executed this design, the bold undertaking which he was then meditating would have been impossible; for the soldiers would have



have been led to shun the obstacles of danger which every way encountered them, by flight, and the general himself must have been compelled to follow them.

His mind being relieved from this anxiety, having ratified the alliance with the Totonacas, and given proper orders for the security and advancement of the new colony, he prepared for his journey to Mexico. He left fifty men in Vera-Cruz under the command of Juan d'Escalante, one of the best officers of the armament, charged the Chempoallese to assist the Spaniards to complete the building of the fortrefs, and to supply them with all the provisions they required. He set out himself on the 16th of August with four hundred and fifteen Spanish infantry, sixteen horses, two hundred *Tlamama*, or men of burden, to transport his baggage and artillery, and some troops of Totonacas, amongst which were forty nobles, whom Cortes carried with him as auxiliaries in war, and hostages of that nation.

He travelled through Xalapan and Texotla, and after having crossed with infinite fatigue some desert mountains, of a severe temperature of air, he arrived at Xocotla (*t*), a large city, consisting of beautiful buildings, among which arose thirteen temples, and the palace of its lord, which was built of stone and lime, and composed of a number of excellent halls and chambers, being the most complete fabrick they had as yet seen in the New World. The king of Mexico owned in this place, and in the hamlets contiguous to it, twenty thousand vassals, and had five thousand Mexicans garrifoned in it. *Olin-tetl*, which was the name of the lord of Xocotla, came out

(*t*) Bernal Diaz and Solis call this city *Zocotlan*, which could easily occasion an error, as it would be easy to confound it with *Zacatlan*, situated at the distance of thirty miles from Tlascala, towards the north.

out to meet the Spaniards, and lodged them commodiously in that city; but with respect to provisions, there appeared at first some scarcity, until from the information of the Totonacas they received a high opinion of their bravery and the power of their arms, and their horses. In the conference which he had with the Spanish general, each boasted to the other of the grandeur and power of their respective Sovereigns. Cortes inconsiderately demanded of him to acknowledge obedience to the Catholic king, and to pay homage to his Sovereignty in some quantity of gold. "I have enough of gold," answered *Olintetl*, "but cannot give it without the express order of my king." "I will soon," said Cortes, make him order you to give it, and all that you have. If he shall command me, returned *Olintetl*, I will not only render up my gold, and all my estate, but even my person. But that which Cortes could not obtain by threats from this chief, he got through pure liberality from two other respectable persons of that valley, who having come on purpose to visit him, presented him some necklaces of gold, and seven or eight slaves. Cortes found himself in some perplexity here with regard to the route he should pursue to Mexico. The lord of Xocotla and the commander of the Mexican garrison advised him to proceed through Cholula; but he judged the advice more sincere which the Totonacas gave him, to pass through Tlascala. And in fact it will appear, that if he had gone straight to Cholula, he and his whole force must have been destroyed. In order to obtain permission from the Tlascalans to pass through their country, he sent four of the Chempoallese, whom he carried with him as messengers to their senate; but they, as appears hereafter, did not deliver their embassy in the name of the Spaniards, but  
of

of the Totonacas, either because they had been so ordered by the Spanish general, or because they themselves considered it most proper to do so.

From Xocotla the Spanish army proceeded to *Iztacmaxtitlan*, the population of which extended for ten or twelve miles in two uninterrupted lines of houses upon the two opposite banks of a small river, which runs through the bottom of that long and narrow valley; but the proper city of *Iztacmaxtitlan*, composed of good buildings, and inhabited by six thousand people, occupied the top of a lofty steep mountain, the lord of which was one of those two persons who visited and made presents to Cortes in Xocotla. To the naturally difficult access of the place were added stout walls, with barbicans and ditches (*u*); for, on account of its being on the frontiers of the Tlascalans, it was more exposed to their invasions. There the Spaniards were well received and entertained.

In the mean while the request of their embassy was discussing in the senate of Tlascala. All that great city was in alarm at the intelligence of such strangers, and particularly at the account which the Chempoallese gave of their aspect, their bravery, the size of their vessels, the agility and strength of their horses, and the dreadful thunder and destructive violence of their artillery. Xicotencatl Maxicatzin, General of the army of the republic, Tlecul, Xolotzin, and Citlalpocatzin, were the four lords or chiefs who at that time governed the republic. The Chempoallese messengers (*x*) were gra-

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ciously

(*u*) Cortes, in his second letter, compares the fortrefs of *Iztacmaxtitlan* to the best in Spain.

(*x*) Bernal Diaz says, that the messengers were only two in number, and that as soon as they arrived at Tlascala they were put in prison; but Cortes himself



ciously received, and lodged in the house appropriated for ambassadors; and after they had reposed and dined were introduced into the senate to explain their embassy. There, after having bowed most profoundly, and saluted with all the other necessary ceremonies, they delivered themselves to this purpose: "Most great and valiant  
" chiefs, may the gods prosper you, and grant you vic-  
" tory over your enemies. The lord of Chempoalla,  
" and all the nation of Totonacas, offer their respects to  
" acquaint you, that from the quarter of the East there  
" are arrived in our country in large ships certain bold  
" adventurous heroes, by the assistance of whom we are  
" now freed from the tyrannical dominion of the king  
" of Mexico. They acknowledge themselves the sub-  
" jects of a powerful monarch, in whose name they come  
" to visit you, to communicate intelligence to you of a  
" true God, and to assist you against your ancient and  
" inveterate enemy. Our nation, following the dictates  
" of that strict friendship which has always subsisted be-  
" tween it and this republic, counsel you to receive those  
" strangers as friends, who, though few in number, are  
" equal in worth to many." Maxicatzin answered, in the name of the senate, that they thanked the Totonacas for their intelligence and counsel, and those brave strangers for the assistance which they offered them, but that they required some time to deliberate upon a point of such importance; that in the mean time they would be pleased to return to their abode, where they would be  
treated

himself, who sent them, affirms, that they were four in number; and from the context of his letter, it appears that Bernal Diaz was ill informed of what passed in Tlascala. The account given by this writer being contrary to that of other ancient historians, both Spanish and Indian, has led many authors, and Robertson among the rest, into errors.

treated with the distinction due to their character and birth. The ambassadors having returned, the senate entered into consideration of the embassy.

Maxicatzin, who was highly esteemed among them, both for his prudence and benevolence of disposition, said, That they ought not to refuse the advice given them by friends so faithful to them, and so hostile to the greatest enemy of the republic; that those strangers, according to the marks which the Chempoallese gave of them, appeared to be those heroes, who, agreeably to their tradition, were to arrive in that country; that the earthquakes which had been felt a little before, the comet which was then seen in the heavens, and several other events of those last years, were indications that the time of the fulfilment of that tradition was at hand; that if they were immortal, it would be in vain for the republic to oppose their entry. "Our refusal," he added, "may be productive of the most fatal misfortunes, and it would be a subject of malicious pleasure to the king of Mexico, to see those whom the republic would not graciously receive into their dominions, introduce themselves by force: that he was therefore of opinion they should be friendly received."—Although this opinion was listened to with great applause, it was immediately opposed by *Xicotencatl*, an old chief of great authority on account of his long experience in civil and military affairs. "Our law," he said, "enjoins us to receive strangers, but not enemies, who may cause disasters to the state. Those men who demand entrance into our city, appear to be rather monsters cast up from the sea, because it could not endure them in its waters, than gods descended from heaven, as some have vainly imagined. Is it possible they can be gods, who

“ who so greedily covet gold and pleasures ? And what  
 “ ought we not to dread from them in a country so poor  
 “ as this is, where we are even destitute of salt ? He  
 “ wrongs the honour of the nation who thinks it can  
 “ be overcome by a handful of adventurers. If they  
 “ are mortal, the arms of the Tlascalans will tell it to  
 “ all the regions round ; if they are immortal, there  
 “ will always be time to appease their anger by homage,  
 “ and to implore their mercy by repentance. Let their  
 “ demand, therefore, be rejected ; and if they dare to  
 “ enter by force, let our arms repel their temerity.”—

This contrariety of sentiment in two persons of so great respect divided the minds of the other senators. Those who were the friends of commerce, and attached to a life of peace, adhered to the opinion of Maxicatzin, while those who were of a military disposition embraced the proposal of *Xicotencatl*. *Temiloltecatl*, one of the senators, suggested a middle course, which would reconcile the two parties. He proposed that a civil and friendly answer should be sent to the chief of those strangers, granting them permission to enter ; but at the same time that orders should be given to *Xicotencatl*, the son of the old *Xicotencatl*, to go out with the troops of the Otomies belonging to the republic, to oppose their passage, and to try their strength.—“ If we remain victors,” said *Temiloltecatl*, “ we will do our arms immortal honour ; if  
 “ we are vanquished, we will accuse the Otomies, and  
 “ charge them with having undertaken the war without  
 “ our orders (y).” Such resources and expedients, though frequent, especially among cultivated nations,  
 are

(y) We have mentioned formerly, that many Otomies had taken refuge in Tlascala, from the tyranny of the Mexicans, and had served the republic faithfully.



are not the less contrary to the good faith reciprocally due between men.—The senate agreed to the counsel of *Temiloltecatl* ; but before the messengers were dispatched with their answer, the proposed orders were given to *Xicotencatl*. This was an intrepid youth, an enemy to peace, and enthusiastic for military glory, who eagerly accepted of the commission, as it furnished him with a most eligible opportunity to display his bravery.

Cortes, after having waited eight days for the determination of the senate, imagining that the delay was the consequence of that slowness attending the majesty of potentates, and not doubting, from what the Chempoallese had told him of being well received by the Tlascalans, left Iztacmaxtitlan with all his army, which, besides the Totonacas and Spaniards, was composed of a considerable number of *Mexican* troops of the garrison of Xocotla, and marched in regular order as usual to the great wall, which on that quarter separates the states of Tlascala from those of Mexico ; the description and dimensions of which we have given in the preceding book, where we treated of the fortifications of the Mexicans. It was constructed by the Tlascalans to defend themselves from the invasions of the Mexicans on their eastern frontiers, in the same manner as they had formed ditches and entrenchments for the same purpose in the quarter of the west. The entrance of the walls, which was wont to be guarded by the Otomies, at this time when it was most necessary, upon some account or other, of which we are ignorant, was left without any garrison, by which accident the Spanish army entered without any opposition into the territory of the republic, which they could not otherwise have done without spilling a great deal of blood.

This

This day, which was the 31st of August, some armed Indians shewed themselves at a distance. The cavalry, which was advanced before the army, in endeavouring to come up with them to gain intelligence of the resolution of the senate, had two horses killed, and three others and two men wounded; a loss most sensibly felt in so small a troop of horse. A body then appeared, imagined to consist of about four thousand men, which was immediately charged upon by the Spaniards and allies, and in a short time defeated, with the death of fifty Otomies. A little after arrived two of the Chempoallese messengers, with some Tlascalans, who paid their compliments to Cortes in the name of the senate, and made him acquainted with the permission which was granted him to go with his army to Tlascala, blaming the Otomies for the hostilities which they had suffered, and offering to pay him for the horses which they had killed. Cortes pretended to believe them, and declared his gratitude to the senate. The Tlascalans took their leave, and carried their dead off the field to burn them. Cortes, on his part, buried the two horses which had been killed. that the sight of them might not encourage the enemy to new hostilities.

The following day the Spanish army marched to the neighbourhood of two mountains, where there were some steep grounds and precipices. There the other two Chempoallese messengers, who had remained still in Tlascala, arrived bathed in sweat and tears, accusing the Tlascalans of treachery and cruelty; for that, regardless of the rights of nations, they had ill used, imprisoned, and destined them for sacrifices, which fate they escaped by setting each other free. This account of the Chempoallese was certainly false, as it was altogether impossible,

ble, not to say difficult, for victims to liberate themselves, not only on account of the closeness of the cage which confined them, but also the vigilance of the guards which watched them; and still more so, because there is no memory among those nations that the Tlascalans had ever failed in the respect due to the characters of ambassadors, and especially where they were so strictly connected in friendship as they were with the Totonacas. What appears more probable is, that the senate, after it had sent back the two first messengers, detained the other two to despatch them after they had tried the strength of the Spanish troops; but that the two last, grown impatient of delay, absented secretly, and endeavoured to excuse their flight with these pretences.

The Chempoallese had hardly finished their story, when a Tlascalan squadron, consisting of about a thousand men, made their appearance; and, as they drew near the Spaniards, began to throw stones, darts, and arrows at them. Cortes, after having protested to them, before the notary royal of the army, by means of three prisoners, that he had not come to do them any hurt, and having entreated them not to treat him as an enemy, perceiving that nothing would avail, he gave orders to repulse them. The Tlascalans retreated gradually until they brought the Spaniards to the steep grounds where they could not make use of their horses, and where a large army of the enemy expected them, concerning the number of which authors have been various in their opinions (z). There a terrible contest began,  
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(z) Bernal Diaz says, that the army of the Tlascalans consisted of about forty thousand men. To Cortes they appeared to exceed a hundred thousand. Other historians have said thirty thousand. It is difficult to compute the number of a large army by the eye, especially when they do not preserve the order of European troops. In order to avoid an error, we have said simply that the army was numerous.



in which the Spaniards thought they must have been totally destroyed. But having formed themselves afresh, in the best manner they could, and being encouraged by the example and exhortations of their general, they extricated themselves from that dangerous situation ; and coming again into the plain, they made such havock of the enemy with their artillery and horses, that they forced them to retreat. Of the Tlascalans a vast number were wounded, and not a few lay dead on the field. Of the Spaniards, although fifteen were dangerously wounded, one only died the next day. On this occasion a famous duel happened between an officer of the Tlascalans and one of the Chempoallese nobles, who had been sent with the message from Cortes to the Tlascalans. They fought for some time most bravely in sight of the two armies, until at last the Chempoallese noble prevailed ; and having thrown his antagonist to the ground, cut off his head, and bore it in triumph to his camp. The victory was celebrated with acclamations and martial music. The place where the battle was fought was called *Teoatzinco*, or place of the Divine Water, and is still known in that country.

That night the Spanish army fixed their camp upon a hill, where there was a tower, about eighteen miles from the capital of Tlascala. They erected barracks for the accommodation of the troops, and formed entrenchments for their defence. In this place the Spaniards remained encamped until the peace with the Tlascalans.

Cortes, in order to compel the Tlascalans, by hostilities, to accept of peace and the friendship which he offered, made an excursion on the 3d of September, with his cavalry, a hundred Spanish infantry, three hundred Chempoallas, and three hundred Mexicans of the garrison

rison of Iztamaxtitlan, set fire to five or six hamlets, and made four hundred prisoners, whom, after having careſſed and entertained them, he ſet at liberty, charging the principal perſons among them to go and offer peace, in his name, to the chiefs of that nation. They immediately went to the young Xicotencatl, who was encamped, with a large army, ſix miles diſtant from that hill. This fiery youth answered, that if the Spaniards wiſhed to treat of peace, they might go to the capital, where they would be ſacrificed as victims to their gods, and their fleſh be made food for the Tlafcalans; that, as to himſelf, he would come the next day in perſon, to give them a deciſive answer. This reſolution being communicated to the Spaniards by the ſame meſſenger, raiſed ſuch an alarm amongſt them, that they prepared themſelves that night for death by the confeſſion of the ſacrament, without, however, omitting the neceſſary diſpoſitions for their defence.

The following day, the 5th of September, the Tlafcalan army appeared not leſs terrible, from the immense multitude of their numbers, than beautiful to view, from the infinite variety of their plumes, and other military ornaments. It was divided into ten ſquadrons, each of ten thouſand men; every one carried its proper ſtandard. In the rear-guard, according to the cuſtom of that nation, was placed the common ſtandard of the republic, which, as we have already mentioned, was a golden eagle with expanded wings. The prince Xicotencatl, in order to make it underſtood how little he valued the arms of the Spaniards, and that he ſcorned to take them by famine, but meant to conquer them by battle, ſent them a reſreſhment of three hundred turkies and two hundred baſkets of *Tamalli*, to recruit

their strength for the engagement. A little after he detached two thousand brave men to enter the camp of the Spaniards by assault. This attack was so violent and sudden, that they forced the entrenchments, entered the camp, and encountered man to man with the Spaniards. The Tlascalans might now have proved conquerors, not only from the superiority of their numbers, but also from their bravery and the nature of their arms, which were pikes, lances, swords, and darts, with double and triple points, if a discord among themselves had not rendered the victory easy to their enemies. The son of Chichimeca Teuctli, who commanded a body of troops belonging to his father, having received some insult in words from the arrogant Xicotencatl, conceived so much indignation against him, that he challenged him to a single combat, which should determine their courage and their fortune; but having been refused this satisfaction, in order to be in some measure revenged, he withdrew from the field with the troops which were under his command, and prevailed upon those of Tlehuexolotzin to follow him. In spite of this disjunction of the army, the battle was obstinate and bloody. The Spaniards, after having bravely repulsed the force which had assaulted their camp, marched in order of battle against the body of the Tlascalan army. The havock made by the artillery upon the crowded multitude of the enemy, was not sufficient to put the Tlascalans to flight, nor prevent them from filling up with expedition all the vacancies left by the dead; on the contrary, by their steadiness and intrepidity, they threw the Spaniards into some confusion, notwithstanding the cries and reproaches of Cortes and his captains. At length, after some hours of engagement, the Spaniards  
returned



returned victorious to their camp, although the Tlascalans did not desist from frequent assaults upon them during the whole of that day. Of the Spaniards, one man was missing, and sixty were wounded; likewise all the horses. Of the Tlascalans, great numbers were killed, but not a single dead body was to be seen by the Spaniards, owing to the diligence and activity with which they carried them off the field of battle.

Xicotencatl, disgusted at the unhappy issue of this expedition, consulted the diviners of Tlascala, who reported that those strangers being the children of the sun were invincible during the day; but, as soon as night arrived, by want of the genial heat of that luminary, they were deprived of strength to defend themselves. In consequence of this oracle, that general resolved to make another assault upon the Spanish camp during the night. In the mean while, Cortes sallied out afresh to commit hostilities in the neighbouring villages, of which he burned ten, and among those one of three thousand houses, and returned with several prisoners.

Xicotencatl, that the blow might not fail which he meditated upon the Spaniards, took pains first to gain information of the strength and disposition of their camp. He sent therefore fifty men to Cortes with a present, accompanied with many expressions of kindness and courtesy, charging them to observe every thing minutely: but they were unable to do this with dissimulation sufficient to prevent its being discovered by Teuch, one of the three principal Chempoallese, who immediately intimated his suspicion to Cortes. This general having called some of the spies aside, forced them by means of threats to reveal that Xicotencatl was preparing to attack them the following night, and that they were  
sent

sent on purpose to observe, at what part of the camp they could most easily make their entry. Cortes having heard this confession (*a*), made the hands of all the fifty be cut off, and sent them back to Xicotencatl, desiring them to let him know that come when he would, by day or by night, he would always make him sensible that they were Spaniards; and the circumstances appearing to favour the battle expected before the army had made all their preparations for the assault, he set out about the close of the night with a considerable number of troops and his horses, to which he ordered little bells to be hung at the armour of their breasts, and went to meet the enemy, who were just beginning their march towards the Spanish camp. The sight of the punishment executed upon the spies, and the sound of the little bells in the silence and darkness of the night, raised such a tremor among the Tlascalans, that they suddenly started into confusion and disorder, and fled different ways, while Xicotencatl himself, deserted and alone, returned in shame to Tlascala. Upon this Maxixcatzin took occasion to inculcate his first counsel, adding to the arguments he had already used, the sad experience of so many expeditions which had ended unsuccessfully; he accordingly moved their minds to peace.

While this affair was agitating in Tlascala, the Mexicans were deliberating what course should be taken with those strangers. Montezuma having heard of the victories of the Spaniards, and apprehensive of their confederating with the Tlascalans, summoned the king of Tezcuco, his nephew, the prince Cuitlahuatzin, and his other counsellors, explained the state of affairs to them,  
disclosed

(*a*) Some historians say, that the fingers only of the Tlascalan spies were cut off; but Cortes himself says, that he made their hands be cut off.

disclosed his fears, and demanded their advice. The king of Tezcucó adhered to his former opinion; which was, that those strangers should be courteously treated in every place through which they passed; that they should be kindly welcomed at court, and their propositions heard, as well as those of any other vassal, the king still preserving his supreme authority, and exacting the decorum and respect due to the majesty of the throne; that if they should design any thing against the person of the king, or the state, force and severity should then be employed against them. The prince Cuitlahuatzin repeated what he had said in the first conference, which was, that it did not seem expedient to admit those strangers into the court; that a valuable present should be sent to their chief, that he should be asked what things of that country he demanded for the great lord in whose name he came, and that he should be offered the friendship and correspondence of the Mexicans; but, at the same time, he should again be importuned to return to his native country. Among the rest of the counsellors, some adopted the opinion of the king of Tezcucó, some that of the lord of Iztapalapan, while others sided with Montezuma. This unfortunate king saw every where objects and motives of terror. The confederacy which he dreaded of the Tlascalans with the Spaniards kept him in the utmost uneasiness. On the other hand, he was apprehensive of the alliance of Cortes with the prince Ixtlilxochitl, his nephew and sworn enemy, who from the time that he had conspired against the king of Tezcucó his brother, had never laid down his arms, and was at this very juncture at the head of a formidable army at Otompan. Those causes  
of



of alarm were still more augmented by the rebellion of several provinces who had followed the example of the Totonacas.

He sent therefore six ambassadors to Cortes, with a thousand curious cotton dresses, and a large quantity of gold and beautiful feathers, and charged them to congratulate him in his name upon his victories, to make him offers of still more considerable presents, and to dissuade him from the journey to Mexico, by representing to him the difficulty of the way, and other obstacles not easy to be surmounted. The ambassadors immediately departed, with a retinue of more than two hundred men, and having arrived at the Spanish camp, executed with punctuality the whole of their commission. Cortes received them with all the respect due to their character, and acknowledged himself infinitely obliged to the bounty of so great a monarch; but he purposely detained the ambassadors, in hopes that in the time of their stay some occasion of engaging with the Tlascalans might present itself, by which the Mexicans might be impressed with an idea of the bravery of his troops, and the superiority of the European arms; or that if peace should be made with the republic, they might be witnesses of the severity with which he intended to reprimand the Tlascalans for their obstinacy. It was not long before the occasion which he so much desired presented itself. Three divisions of the enemy came down upon the Spanish camp with terrible howls, and a tempest of darts and arrows. Cortes, although he had that day taken a purgative medicine, mounted on horseback, and went intrepidly against the Tlascalans, who were defeated without much trouble in the sight of the Mexican ambassadors.

The

The partizans of the old Xicotencatl being at last persuaded that the war with the Spaniards was by no means advantageous to the republic, and fearing besides that they might form an alliance with the Mexicans, unanimously resolved to make peace, and chose the same general who had fought against them to mediate between them. Xicotencatl, though at first he refused to do so, from being ashamed of the unhappy issue of the war, was at last obliged to charge himself with the commission. He was accompanied to the camp by a noble and numerous retinue, saluted Cortes in the name of the republic, excused themselves for the hostilities already shewn, from having believed him to be the ally of Montezuma, not only on account of the superb presents sent him from Mexico, but also the large troop of Mexicans who followed him; promised him a firm peace, and an eternal alliance with the Tlascalans, and presented him a little gold, and some bales of fine cotton, apologizing for the scantiness of their offers, with the poverty of their country occasioned by their constant wars with the Mexicans, who prevented their commerce with other provinces. Cortes omitted no demonstration of respect towards Xicotencatl; he made an appearance of being satisfied with his excuses, but required that the peace should be sincere and permanent; for that if they ever broke it, he would take such revenge as would make an example of them to other nations.

Peace being concluded, and Xicotencatl having taken his leave, Cortes ordered mass to be celebrated as a thanksgiving to the Almighty. Every one will be able to imagine the displeasure the Mexican ambassadors must have received in seeing such an accommodation take place. They complained of it to Cortes, and blamed his

his easy credulity in the promises of men so perfidious as the Tlascalans. They told him, that those appearances of peace were designed for no other purpose than to inspire him with confidence to enter their capital, that they might there, without hazard, execute that which they had not been able to accomplish by arms in the field; that it was fit he should contrast the conduct of their senate with that of the court of Mexico: the Tlascalans after having, with the semblance of peace, granted them permission to enter their country, had yet not desisted from making war upon them, until they found all their aims and opposition fruitless. From the Mexicans, on the contrary, they had suffered no hostilities, had rather met with the most different reception, the greatest respect and attention in every place of their dominions where they had passed, and from their sovereign the most distinguished proofs of benevolence and friendship. Cortes answered, that he never meant by such connexion to do wrong to the court of Mexico, to which he acknowledged himself under high obligations; as he was desirous of peace with all parties; that besides he did not fear any thing from the Tlascalans, if they chose to become his enemies; that as for him and the other Spaniards, it was the same thing whether they were attacked in a city or in the country, by night or by day, as they were skilled to conquer at all times, and in all places; that even on account of that very insinuation which they had thrown out against the Tlascalans, he was desirous of repairing to their city, to have an opportunity there of taking exemplary vengeance on their perfidy.

The Tlascalans were extremely distant from any such dissingenuousness as was imputed to them by the Mexicans; for from that moment in which peace was decreed by the senate,



senate, they continued the most faithful allies of the Spaniards, as will appear in the sequel. The senate desired to have Cortes at Tlascala with all his troops, to confirm more effectually their stipulated friendship, and to treat seriously of a confederacy against the Mexicans, and had already, by means of their messengers, invited that general to accept of accommodation in their city; professing the utmost regret at seeing such illustrious friends of the republic suffering so many inconveniences.

The alliance with the Tlascalans was not the only fruit which the Spaniards reaped from their victories. In the same camp where he had received the Tlascalan ambassador, he was favoured with two other embassies from the republic of Huexotzinco, and the prince Ixtlilxochitl. The Huexotzincas, who had formerly been vassals of the crown of Mexico, and the enemies of the Tlascalans, had delivered themselves from the dominion of the Mexicans, and confederated with the Tlascalans their neighbours, and now they imitated their example in making offers of alliance and confederacy to the Spaniards. The prince Ixtlilxochitl sent ambassadors to Cortes, to congratulate him on his victories over the Tlascalans, and to invite him to make a journey to Teotlalpan, where he proposed to unite his forces with those of the Spaniards against the king of Mexico. Cortes, as soon as he was informed of the rank, pretensions, and forces of that prince, readily accepted his alliance, and engaged to assist to place him upon the throne of Acolhuacan.

At the same time the ambassador, who was expected from Mexico, returned from that court with a present of jewels and gold, worth fifteen hundred sequins, two hundred costly habits of feathers, and new suggestions from that monarch to divert the Spanish general from his

journey to Mexico, and from any friendship with the Tlascalans. Such were the vain efforts of pusillanimity in Montezuma, while the great quantity of gold he daily expended in presents to those strangers, was but so much more in purchase of the chains which were soon to fetter his liberty.

Six days had elapsed since the peace made with Tlascala, when the four lords of that republic, in order to induce the Spaniards to remove to Tlascala, made themselves be transported in portable chairs or litters, with a numerous attendance to their camp. The mutual demonstrations of joy and respect were extraordinary on both sides. That famous senate, not contented with ratifying the alliance, of their own accord acknowledged obedience to the Catholic king, which was the more acceptable to the Spaniards, the more the Tlascalans had prized their liberty, which they had enjoyed from time immemorial. They complained with much show of affection, of the diffidence of Cortes, and prevailed upon him by their entreaties to resolve upon his departure for Tlascala the next day.

There was now a deficiency of fifty-five Spaniards of the number who had enlisted in Cuba, and those remaining were for the most part wounded and dispirited; and such discontent and apprehensions began to seize the soldiers, that they not only spoke disrespectfully of their chief in private, but also conjured him to return to Vera Cruz; but Cortes encouraged them, and by powerful arguments touching their honour, and his own example of fortitude and firmness in dangers and fatigue, he rekindled in them fresh zeal for his undertakings. At length they all seemed to conceive hopes of success, from  
the

the confederacies they had made, to the projects of their general.

The Mexican ambassadors whom Cortes still detained with him, refused to accompany him to Tlascala ; but he persuaded them to go along with him, promising them, that they should be perfectly secure under his protection. Having removed their doubts, he marched his army in good order and preparation for every event. In the cities of Tecompantzinco and Atlihuetzian, they were received with all possible courtesy, though not in a style equal to the magnificent entry they made into the capital, from which the four lords of the republic came out to meet the Spaniards with a numerous concourse of the nobility, and so great a crowd of inhabitants, that some have affirmed they amounted to a hundred thousand people ; a calculation, by no means improbable, considering the populousness of Tlascala, and the surprising novelty of those extraordinary strangers, who awakened the curiosity of all that extensive region. In all the streets of the city were formed, according to the usage of those nations, arches of flowers and branches, and a confused music of instruments and acclamations resounded from all sides, accompanied with such jubilee and rejoicing, that it appeared to be rather the celebration of the triumph of the republic than of that of its enemies. This day still commemorated in Tlascala, was the 23d of September, 1519.

That city was then one of the most considerable in the country of Anahuac. Cortes, in his letters to Charles V. affirms, that in grandeur, populousness, buildings, and abundance of the necessaries of life, it exceeded Granada when that was taken from the Moors ; and that at the market, of which he gives a description, there daily assembled about thirty thousand merchants and people of business.



business. The same conqueror attests, that having obtained an order of the senate to make the houses and inhabitants be numbered which were in the city, the villages, and hamlets of the republic, there were found upwards of fifty thousand houses, and more than five hundred thousand inhabitants.

The Tlascalans had prepared, for the Spaniards and all their allies, a handsome and commodious dwelling. Cortes desired that the Mexican ambassadors might be lodged in apartments near to his own, not only in respect to them, but also to banish from their minds any distrust of the Tlascalans. The chiefs of the republic, in order to give the Spaniards a new proof of the sincerity of their friendship, presented to Cortes thirty beautiful young women. Cortes refused them at first, alleging, that the Christian law forbid polygamy; but afterwards, to avoid giving offence, he accepted some of them as companions to Marina. In spite of this refusal, they presented him soon after five virgins of the first nobility, whom Cortes accepted for the sake of strengthening his friendship with the republic.

Encouraged by this successful beginning, Cortes became desirous of persuading the chiefs of the republic and the nobles, to abandon their superstitious rites, and acknowledge the only true divinity; but although his reasons were persuasive, and they confessed the power of that God whom the Spaniards adored, they could not, however, be induced to renounce their absurd deities, because they believed them dispensers of human felicity. “Our god Camaxtle,” they said, “grants  
“us victory over our enemies; our goddess Matlalcueje  
“sends rain to our fields, and defends us from the inun-  
“dation

“ dation of Zahuapan (*b*). To each of our gods we  
“ are indebted for a part of the happiness of our lives,  
“ and their anger, if provoked, might draw down upon  
“ the state the most severe punishment.” Cortes, stimulated by a zeal too ardent and violent, was desirous of treating the idols of Tlascala in the same manner as he had successfully done those of Chempoallan; but Olmedo, and other persons of respect, dissuaded him from so rash an attempt, representing to him, that such an act of violence, besides not being conducive to the promulgation of the gospel, might prove the ruin of the Spaniards in a city so populous, and attached to superstition. Nevertheless, he did not cease, during twenty days which he stopped there, to reproach them with the cruelties of their sacrifices, and to inculcate the purity of his system of morality, the falseness of their deities, and the existence of a supreme Being, who governs all natural causes, and watches with most admirable providence over the preservation of his creatures. Those exhortations, made by a person of so great authority, and of whom the Tlascalans had formed a very elevated idea, although they did not produce all the effect desired, had considerable influence, and so far moved the senate, that they consented to break the cages, and set at liberty all the prisoners and slaves which were to be sacrificed to their gods on solemn festivals, or other public occasions of the state.

Thus every day the alliance with the Tlascalans was more firmly established, in spite of the repeated suggestions of the Mexican ambassadors to break it. Cortes, though well persuaded of the sincerity of the Tlascalans, had given orders to his troops to hold themselves always prepared for whatever might happen. The senate was  
offended

(*b*) A river of Tlascala.

offended at this, and complained bitterly of his diffidence, after so many manifest proofs of their good faith; but Cortes excused it, by protesting, that he did not so from any diffidence of the Tlascalans, but because it was the practice of the Spaniards: this answer satisfied the senate, and the discipline of his soldiers pleased them so much, that Maxixcatzin proposed to introduce it among the troops of the republic.

At length Cortes having procured, during the time he stayed in Tlascala, a distinct information of the city of Mexico, of the forces of that kingdom, and every other particular which could farther his projects, determined to continue his journey; but before he set out, he presented a great number of the most beautiful habits which he had received from Montezuma, to the Tlascalans. He was doubtful of the route he should pursue to that city. The Mexican ambassadors proposed that he should go by Cholula, where there was good accommodation prepared for all his people. The Tlascalans opposed that intention, by representing the perfidy of the Cholulans, and advised him to proceed by Huexotzinco, a state confederated equally with them and the Spaniards, but Cortes resolved to go by Cholula, not only to please the ambassadors, but also to shew the Tlascalans the little regard he paid to the force of his enemies.

The Cholulans had been formerly the allies of the Tlascalans; but upon the arrival of the Spaniards were confederated with the Mexicans, and the sworn enemies of that republic. The cause of so great an enmity had been the perfidy of the Cholulans. In a battle with the Mexicans, while they were yet the allies of the Tlascalans, being in the vanguard of the army, by a sudden evolution they put themselves in the rear, and, attacking the



the Tlascalans behind while the Mexicans were upon their front, made a great slaughter of them. The hatred which this detestable treachery had raised in the breasts of the Tlascalans made them anxious for an opportunity of revenge, and no time had appeared more favourable than now, when they were become confederated with the Spaniards. In order to inspire Cortes with dislike to them, and induce him to make war upon that state, they acquainted him with its conduct towards him; that they had not sent any messengers with compliments to him, whereas the Huexotzincas had done so, although their state was at a much greater distance. They informed him also of the message which they said they had received from the Cholulans, reproaching them for their alliance with the Spaniards; calling them base and cowardly, and threatening them, that if they should attempt any thing against their sacred city they should all perish by being drowned; for among their other errors, they were persuaded, that whenever they chose they could, by raising the walls of the sanctuary of Quetzalcoatl, make such large rivers spring from thence, as would in a moment overflow the city; and although the Tlascalans dreaded such a catastrophe, the desire of revenge overcame their fears.

Cortes, moved by these suggestions, sent four noble Tlascalans to Cholula, to know why they had not paid the same regard which was shewn to him by the Huexotzincas. The Cholulans laid their excuse on the enmity of the Tlascalans, in whom they never could repose any confidence (c). This answer was brought by four common

(c) Torquemada adds, that the Cholulans retained the principal messenger of the Tlascalans, and with savage cruelty flayed his face and arms, and cut off his

mon people, which was considered as a manifest demonstration of disrespect. Cortes being advertised of it by the Tlascalans, sent four of the Chempoallese, to tell the Cholulans that the embassy of a monarch so great as the king of Spain, ought not to have been entrusted to such low messengers, nor were they themselves worthy to hear it; to let them know, that the Catholic king was the true lord of all that country, and that in his name he came to demand homage of those people; that those who should submit to him would be honoured, and the rebels punished according to their desert; that therefore they should make their appearance within three days in Tlascalala, to give obedience to their sovereign, otherwise they would be treated as enemies. The Cholulans, although it is to be supposed they treated so arrogant an embassy with burlesque, in order to dissemble their malicious intention, presented themselves the next day to Cortes, requesting him to excuse their omission, occasioned by the enmity of the Tlascalans, declaring themselves not only the friends of the Spaniards, but also the vassals of the king of Spain.

Having determined his route through Cholula, Cortes set out with all his people, and a considerable number of Tlascalan troops (*d*), all which he soon discharged, except six thousand men, whom he chose to accompany him. A little way before they arrived at Cholula, the principal

his hands; but this account is unquestionably false, for so atrocious a proceeding could not remain unknown to the Spaniards; but neither Cortes, Bernal Diaz, nor any other of the first historians mention it. Cortes would not have omitted it in his letter to Charles V. to justify the severity of his chastisement of the Cholulans.

(*d*) Cortes says, that this army of the Tlascalans consisted of more than one hundred and forty-nine thousand men. Bernal Diaz affirms, as an undoubted fact, which was well known to him, that it consisted only of fifty thousand men. This number appears the most probable.

principal lords and priests, with censers in their hands and musical instruments, came out to meet him, and after having paid the usual ceremonies of respect, they told the general, that he might enter with all his people and the Totonacas; but they could not admit their enemies the Tlascalans. To this Cortes consented through complaisance, and the Tlascalans remained encamped without the city, imitating in the disposition of their camp, the order of their centinels, and other things, the military discipline of the Spaniards. At the entry of the Spanish army into Cholula, a similar crowd of people was collected, and the same ceremonies, acclamations, and respect, were observed, though not with the same sincerity, as in Tlascala.

Cholula was then a populous city, eighteen miles distant from Tlascala towards the south, and about sixty from Mexico towards the east, and not less celebrated for the commerce of its inhabitants than its religion. It was situated, as it is at present, in a beautiful plain, and at a small distance from that group of mountains which surround the valley of Mexico towards the east. Its population at that time, as Cortes affirms, occupied about forty thousand houses, and there were as many in the circumjacent villages which were in the nature of suburbs to it. Its commerce consisted in manufactures of cotton, gems, and plates of clay, and it was much famed for its jewellers and potters. With respect to religion, it may be said, that Cholula was the Rome of Anahuac. The celebrated Quetzalcoatl having passed so many years in that city, and shewn so much affection to his subjects, was the cause that after his apotheosis, it was consecrated by the most particular worship. The surprising multitude of temples which were there, and in particular the



greater temple, erected upon an artificial mountain, which is still existing, drew innumerable pilgrims, not only from the neighbouring cities, but likewise from the most distant provinces, to perform their devotions at that imagined holy spot.

Cortes was lodged, with all his troops, in some large buildings, where, during the two first days, they were abundantly supplied with provisions ; but very soon they began to grow scanty, until at last there was nothing furnished by the city but wood and water. This was not the only proof of their secret machinations and intentions ; for every moment they discovered new indications of the treachery which they meditated. The Chempoallese allies observed, that they had made holes and dug pits in the streets of the city, in which they had fixed sharp stakes, and covered them with earth, which it appeared was done for no other purpose than to wound and disable the horses. Eight men, who came from the camp of the Tlascalans, apprised them that they had seen crowds of women and children coming out of the city ; a certain sign among those nations of some impending commotion. Besides, it was found out, that in some of the streets they had formed entrenchments, and collected great heaps of stones upon the tops of the houses. Lastly, a Cholulan woman of rank, who had become enamoured of the beauty, the spirit, and discretion of Marina, intreated her to save herself in her house from the danger which threatened the Spaniards ; upon which Marina took occasion to inform herself of the whole plan of the conspiracy, and immediately told Cortes of it. He heard from the mouth of the same person, that the Cholulans, with the assistance of twenty thousand Mexi-

cans

cans (*e*), who were encamped near the city, had concerted to massacre all the Spaniards. Not contented with these discoveries, he charged Marina to use all her art to bring two priests to his dwelling, who confirmed all that had been communicated to her by her female friend.

Cortes, finding himself in such hazard of utter destruction, resolved to adopt the most effectual means for his safety. He ordered the principal persons of the city into his presence, and told them, that if they had any quarrel against the Spaniards, to declare it frankly, as became men of honour, and he would give them suitable satisfaction. They replied, that they were already satisfied with his conduct, and ready to serve him; that whenever he chose to depart, he should be abundantly provided with every thing that was necessary for his journey, and also troops of war for his security. Cortes accepted their offer, and fixed the next day for his departure. The Cholulans were content, as it appeared that every thing would turn out favorable to their treacherous design; but in order to ensure that still more, they sacrificed to their gods ten children, five of each sex. Cortes called together his officers, unfolded to them the perfidious intentions of the Cholulans, and ordered them to give their sentiments. Some were of opinion that their danger should be shunned, by retreating to the city of Huexotzinco, which was hardly nine miles distant, or to Tlascala; but the majority referred themselves to the determination of the general. Cortes gave the

(*e*) Bernal Diaz says, that the Mexican army, according to what he knew, consisted of twenty thousand men. Cortes affirms, that the lords of Cholula confessed to him, that that army was not composed of less than fifty thousand men.

the orders which seemed to him most suited to his purpose, protesting that they could never be secure in Mexico unless they punished that deceitful city with severity. He ordered the auxiliary troops of Tlascala to storm the city at sun-rise the next day, and to cut off every citizen without pardon to any one except women and children.

The day at length arrived, which wreaked disaster on Cholula. The Spaniards prepared their horses, their artillery, their arms, and formed themselves in order, in a square of their dwelling, which was designed for the principal theatre of the approaching tragedy. The Cholulans repaired thither at break of day. The chiefs, with about forty nobles, and the baggage men entered into the halls and chambers to lift up the equipage, when suddenly guards were placed to prevent their escape. The Cholulan troops, or at least great part of them, entered into the square along with the principal lord of that city, at the request, it is probable, of Cortes himself, who, mounting on horseback, spoke to them in this manner : “ Cholulans, I have endeavoured to make  
“ you my friends ; I have entered peaceably into your  
“ city, and here you have received no wrong from me,  
“ nor any of my friends ; but, on the contrary, that you  
“ might have no subject of complaint, I consented that  
“ the auxiliary troops of the Tlascalans should not be  
“ admitted here : besides, I have requested you to say  
“ freely, if we had done you any injury, that you might  
“ have satisfaction ; but you have, with detestable perfidy, under the appearance of friendship, laid a scheme  
“ to betray me, and destroy me and my people. I know  
“ the whole depth of your bloody designs.” Then calling aside four or five Cholulans, he asked them what had induced them to resolve on so execrable an attempt ?  
They



They replied, that the Mexican ambassador, to render an agreeable service to their sovereign, had enticed them to meditate their destruction. Cortes then, with a countenance full of indignation, thus addressed the ambassadors who were present: “ Those wretches, to excuse their  
“ crimes, impute the treachery to you and your king ;  
“ but I neither believe you capable of such infamy, nor  
“ can I persuade myself that the great monarch Montezuma would treat me like a cruel enemy, at the very  
“ time he is giving me the sincerest proofs of his friendship ; and as he could oppose me with open force,  
“ that he would employ traitors to anticipate him ! Be  
“ assured, that I will pay regard to your persons in the  
“ slaughter and blood we shall shed. To-day, those  
“ traitors shall perish, and their city shall be convulsed.  
“ I call heaven and earth to witness, that it is their perfidy which arms our hands for revenge, unnatural to  
“ our hearts.”

Having spoken this, and made the signal of attack by the discharge of a musket, the Spaniards fell with such fury upon those miserable victims, that they did not leave one alive of all those who were in the square. The streams of blood which flowed about, and the painful yells of the wounded and dying enemy, would have been sufficient to have shocked and waked pity in every breast that was not fired with the fury of revenge. Having terminated the tragic scene within, they issued out to the streets, and sheathed their swords in the bodies of all the Cholulans they met. The Tlascalans, on their part, entered the city like famished lions, their fierceness growing with the thirst of the blood of their enemies, and eagerness to please their new allies. A stroke, so keen and unexpected, put the citizens immediately into disorder ;

der ; but having formed themselves into several different squadrons, they made for some time a vigorous resistance, until at last, perceiving the havock which the artillery made, and feeling the superiority of the European arms, they went again into confusion. The greater part of them sought their safety in flight ; some had recourse to the superstitious hope of razing the walls of the temple to deluge the city : but, finding that expedient totally fruitless, they endeavoured to fortify themselves in their houses and temples. But neither did this avail, for the enemy set instant fire to every house where they met with any resistance. The houses and towers of the temples were in flames ; the streets discovered nothing but bloody or half-burnt carcases, and nothing was heard but the insulting menacing clamours of the confederates, the feeble groans of dying men, curses, and imprecations on the victors, and complaints to their gods why they had abandoned them in such calamities. Amongst the many who fled to the towers of the temples, there was but one which surrendered to the victors ; all the rest were either burned to ashes, or met a death less painful, by precipitating themselves from those heights.

By means of this horrid slaughter, in which upwards of six thousand Cholulans (*f*) perished, the city became depopulated. The temples and houses were plundered, the Spaniards seizing all the gems, gold, and silver, and the Tlascalans all the apparel, feathers, and salt. This tragedy was hardly finished, when there appeared near Cholula an army of twenty thousand men, sent by way of  
of

(*f*) Las Casas has grossly disfigured this event of Cholula. The revenge of the Spaniards was perhaps too rigorous, but their provocations were strong. He relates it, as we find it, among the most faithful historians who were present, or were informed by the ancient Spaniards and Indians.

of succour by the republic of Tlascala, under the command of general Xicotencatl. It was probable that this was owing to some despatch having been sent the night before to the senate, by the chiefs of the Tlascalan troops, encamped without the city. Cortes returned thanks for the supply, presented to Xicotencatl and his officers a part of the booty, and requested him to return with his army to Tlascala, as it was not now necessary; but he retained the six thousand men who had assisted him in the punishment of Cholula, that they might accompany him in his journey to Mexico. Thus did the alliance of the Spaniards with the Tlascalans become gradually more firm and established.

Cortes having returned to his dwelling, where forty of the Cholulan nobility remained in a manner prisoners, he was requested by them to give way to mercy, after so much rigour, and to permit one or two of them to go and recall the women, children, and other fugitives, who were wandering in terror and dismay through the mountains. Cortes, being now moved to pity, commanded a cessation of arms, and published a general pardon. Upon the report of this proclamation, suddenly some were seen to rise from among the dead who had counterfeited death in order to escape it, and troops of fugitives coming from the mountains to the city, some bewailing the loss of a son, some a brother, and some their husbands. Cortes ordered the dead bodies to be carried off from the temples and the streets, and set the nobles who were prisoners at liberty. A few days after, that city was again so well peopled it appeared to want none of its inhabitants. Here Cortes received the compliments of the Huexotzincas and the Tlascalans, and an oath of allegiance to the crown of Spain from the Cholulans themselves,



selves, and the Tepejacheſe nation, he adjusted the differences between the two republics of Tlaſcala and Cholula, and re-eſtabliſhed their ancient friendship and alliance, which continued firm ever after. At length, in order to comply with the duties of humanity and religion, he made all the cages of the temples be broken, and ſet all the priſoners and ſlaves at liberty who were deſtined for the ſacrifices. He ordered the greater temple to be cleaned, and raiſed there the ſtandard of the croſs, after giving the Cholulans, as he did to all the other people among whom he ſtopped, ſome idea of the Chriſtian religion.

The Spaniſh general, elated by his ſucceſſes, or perhaps deſirous of intimidating Montezuma, charged the Mexican ambaffadors to tell their maſter, that notwithstanding he had formerly intended to enter peaceably into Mexico, on ſeeing and conſidering what had happened in Cholula, he was now determined to enter as an enemy, and to do him every evil he could. The ambaffadors answered, that before he took a reſolution of that kind, he ought to make a more ſtrict inquiry into the conduct of the Cholulans, to certify himſelf of the good intentions of their ſovereign; that, if he thought proper, one of them would go to the court, and lay his complaints before the king. Cortes conſented to it, and after ſix days the ambaffador returned, bringing a large preſent to the general, conſiſting of ten plates of gold, worth five thouſand ſequins; one thouſand five hundred habits, and a great quantity of proviſions; thanking him, in the name of his ſovereign, for the puniſhment inflicted on the perfidious Cholulans; and proteſting, that the army raiſed to ſurpriſe the Spaniards on their journey, conſiſted of the Acatzincheſe and Itzocaneſe nations

nations, the allies of Cholula, who, although the subjects of the crown of Mexico, had taken up arms without any order from their sovereign. This was confirmed by the asseverations of the ambassadors, and Cortes made an appearance of being perfectly satisfied.

It is not an easy matter to clear up the truth in this particular, neither can we avoid blaming the forwardness of some authors in asserting so freely what they do not know. Why should the Cholulans, who were allowed by all to be a false deceitful nation, be given more credit than the Mexicans, and Montezuma himself, who from the eminence of his rank and character, was more worthy of faith? The invariably pacific disposition of that monarch towards the Spaniards, having attempted no hostile stroke on many and those favourable occasions which occurred, to oppress them; and the moderation with which he always spoke of them, which no authors deny, make the excuse made by the Cholulans improbable: but, on the other hand, it assumes an air of truth from some, though indirect proofs, of the enmity of Montezuma, and in particular from hostilities committed upon the garrison of Vera Cruz by a powerful feudatory of the crown of Mexico.

*Quauhpopoca*, lord of Nauhtlan (called by the Spaniards Almeria), a city situated upon the coast of the Mexican gulf, thirty-six miles towards the north from Vera Cruz, and close to the confines of the Mexican empire in that quarter, had orders from Montezuma to reduce the Totonacas to their wonted obedience, as soon as Cortes had retired from that coast. He, in compliance with those orders, demanded of those people with threats, the tribute which they were accustomed to pay to their sovereign. The Totonacas, rendered insolent

from the favour of their new allies, answered with arrogance, that they would no longer pay homage to him who was no longer their king. Quauhpopoca, perceiving that his requests had no influence in bringing again under subordination men who had so much confidence in their new allies, and no respect for their sovereign, having put himself at the head of the Mexican troops which were in the garrisons of those frontiers, began to make incursions into the settlements of Totonacapan, punishing them by hostilities for their rebellion. The Totonacas made their complaints to Juan de Escalante, governor of the garrison of Vera Cruz, and intreated him to put a stop to the cruelty of the Mexicans, engaging also to assist him with a large number of troops, Escalante sent an embassy to the Mexican chief to dissuade him from hostilities, which he imagined could not be approved of by the king of Mexico, who had shewn so much desire to favour the Spaniards, the protectors of the Totonacas. Quauhpopoca answered, that he knew better than him whether the punishment of those rebels was or was not agreeable to the Mexican king; that if the Spaniards intended to support them, he, with his troops, would meet him on the plain of Nauhtlan, that arms might decide their contest. The governor could not brook this answer; upon which he marched immediately to the appointed place with two horses and two small pieces of cannon, fifty Spanish infantry, and about ten thousand Totonacas. Upon the first onset of the Mexicans, the Totonacas were instantly thrown into confusion, and the greater part took to flight; but to the utter shame of their cowardice, the fifty Spaniards courageously continued the battle, doing no little damage to the Mexicans. They, having never experienced the  
violence



violence of the artillery and the European mode of engagement, retreated in terror to the neighbouring city of Nauhtlan. The Spaniards pursued them with fury, and set fire to some houses; but the victory cost the Spaniards the life of the governor, who died of his wounds in three days after; and of six or seven soldiers, and a number of Totonacas. One of these soldiers, who had a large head and fierce aspect, was taken prisoner and sent to Mexico by Quahpopoca, but having died of his wounds in his way to that city, they only carried his head to Montezuma, the appearance of which so shocked and daunted that king, that he would not have it offered to his gods in any temple of the court.

Cortes received intelligence of these revolutions before he left Cholula (g); but did not think proper to mention them nor discover his uneasiness, lest it might have discouraged his soldiers.

Having nothing more to do in Cholula, he pursued his journey to Mexico with all his Spaniards, six thousand Tlascalans, and some Huexotzincan and Cholulan troops. At Izcalpan, a village of Huexotzinco, fifteen miles distant from Cholula, the chiefs of Huexotzinco, came again to pay their respects to him, and to advertise him, that there were two ways of going to Mexico; the one, an open and well-made road, which lead to some precipices where there was reason to apprehend some ambuscades of the enemy; the other was newly stopped up, and obstructed with trees cut down on purpose, which however was of the two the shorter and more secure route. Cortes availed himself of this intimation, and

(g) All, or nearly all historians say, that intelligence of this revolution reached Cortes when he was in Mexico; but Cortes affirms, that he had it in Cholula.

and in spite of the Mexicans, made the obstacles in this way be removed, under pretence that the difficulty was rather an incitement to the courage and spirits of the Spaniards; and continued his journey through that great wood of pines and oaks, until he ascended to the top of a high mountain, called *Ithualco*, between the two volcanos Popocatepec and Iztaccihuatl, where they found some large houses built for the accommodation of the merchants of Mexico. There they were able to judge of the bold undertaking of the captain Diego de Ordaz, who a few days before, in order to display to those people the courage of his nation, mounted, along with nine other soldiers, to the highest summit of Popocatepec, although he could not see its mouth, or the vent of that great volcano, on account of the deep snow which lay there, and the clouds of smoke and ashes which it threw up from its bowels. (*b*)

From the top of Ithualco the Spaniards got their first view of the beautiful valley of Mexico, but with very different impressions from the prospect; some of them delighted in the sight of its lakes, its pleasant lying plains, its verdant mountains, and numerous and splendid cities, which were situated within and around those lakes; others revived their hopes of enriching themselves with the plunder of so great an extent of country as they there discovered; but the more prudent of those adventurers, on beholding so populous a territory, reflected on the temerity

(*b*) Bernal Diaz, and almost all historians, say that Ordaz ascended to the top of Popocatepec, and observed the mouth of that famous mountain; but Cortes, who knew better, says not. Notwithstanding Ordaz obtained from the Catholic king a volcano to be put in his shield of arms. This great undertaking was reserved for Montagno, and others Spaniards, who, after the conquest of Mexico, not only observed the dreadful mouth of that volcano, but entered there, at the utmost risk of their lives, and got out from it a large quantity of sulphur to make powder for their fire-arms.

merity of encountering the perils before them, and were suddenly so checked by their apprehensions, that they would have immediately returned to Vera Cruz, had not Cortes, by making use of his authority and the reasons suggested by his fruitful genius, infused into them fresh ardour for the undertaking.

In the mean while Montezuma, in consternation at the event of Cholula, retired to the palace Tlillancalmecatli, destined for occasions of grief, and continued there eight days, fasting and observing the usual austerities, in order to obtain the protection of his gods. From this place of retirement he sent four persons of his court with a present to Cortes, and new prayers and entreaties to dissuade him from his journey; offering to pay an annual tribute to the king of Spain, and to give four loads of gold to the Spanish general (*i*), and one to each of his captains and foldiers, if they would, from that place where they might be found by his ambassadors, depart for their native country. In such apprehensions and terror did the small body of Spaniards keep this superstitious prince! He could not have made use of more diligence and arts to shun their sight, had he foreseen all the misfortunes they were to bring upon him. The ambassadors joined Cortes at Ithualco; the present they brought him consisted of several works of gold, which were valued at fifteen hundred sequins. Cortes shewed them every possible respect and attention, and answered by returning thanks to the king for the present and his mag-

(*i*) The ordinary load of a Mexican having been about fifty Spanish pounds, or eight hundred ounces, we may conjecture, considering the number of the Spaniards, that what Montezuma was willing to give them to dissuade them from their journey to the court, was equal to more than three millions of sequins.



magnificent promises, to which he would be able to return good services ; but at the same time declaring, that he could not return back without making himself blameable for disobedience to his sovereign, and promising not to be the means on his part of the smallest injury to the state ; and that, if after having explained to his majesty the embassy which he bore, and which he could not trust with any other person, he should not approve of the longer stay of the Spaniards in his dominions, he would without delay set out on his return to his native country.

Montezuma's uneasiness was increased by the suggestions of the priests, and particularly by the account which they gave of some sayings of their false oracles, and some terrible visions which they said they had during this time. He was at last thrown into such alarm and consternation, that, without waiting for the issue of the last embassy to the Spaniards, he held a new council with the king of Tezcuco, his brother Cuitlahuatzin, and some other persons whom he used to advise with, all of whom maintained their former opinions ; Cuitlahuatzin, that of not admitting the Spaniards to enter the court, and to make them by gentleness or force to quit the kingdom ; while Cacamatzin was for receiving them as ambassadors, as the king had strength enough to crush them, if they should militate either against his royal person or the state. Montezuma, who had hitherto constantly adhered to the opinion of his brother, now embraced that of the king of Tezcuco, but at the same time he charged this same king to go to meet the Spaniards, and to endeavour to dissuade the general from his journey to the court ; Cuitlahuatzin then turning to the king his brother, said, " The gods desire, O king, that you do not receive into  
" your

“ your house those who will drive you from it, and that  
“ you would remedy the evil while you still have time  
“ and means to do it.” “ What shall we do,” returned  
the king, “ if our friends, and what is more our gods,  
“ instead of favouring us, prosper our enemies? I am  
“ resolved, and wish that all would be resolute, not to  
“ fly nor shew any cowardice, happen what will—but I  
“ pity the aged and the young, who have no strength  
“ and can make no defence !”

Cortes having dismissed the Mexican ambassadors, moved with his troops from Ithualco, and proceeded through Amaquemecan and Tlalmanalco, two cities about nine miles distant from each other, and situated near the base of those mountains. Amaquemecan, with its adjacent hamlets, contained two thousand inhabitants (*k*). At those places the Spaniards were well received, and several chiefs of that province visited Cortes, and presented him gold and some slaves ; they complained bitterly of the oppression they suffered from the king of Mexico and his ministers, in the same terms made use of by those of Chempoalla and Chiahuitztla, and at the suggestion of the Chempoallese and Tlascalans, who accompanied Cortes, entered into a confederacy with the Spaniards for the recovery of their liberty. In short, the farther the Spaniards advanced into the country, the more they continued to increase their forces ; like a rivulet, which, by the accession of other streams, swells in its course by degrees into a large river.

From Tlalmanalco the army marched to Ajotzinco, a village situated upon the southern bank of the lake of Chalco

(*k*) Amaquemecan, called by the Spaniards Mecameca, is at present a village no otherwise noted than for having been the birth-place of the celebrated nun Joan Agnes of the Cross, a woman of wonderful genius and uncommon learning.

Chalco (*1*), where there was a harbour for the vessels of merchants who trafficked with the countries to the southward of Mexico. Curiosity to view the quarters of the Spaniards cost very dear to some of the Mexicans, for the Spanish centinels imagining them to be spies, from the apprehensions they were constantly under of some treachery, shot about fifteen of them that night. The following day, just as they were ready to march, some Mexican nobles arrived with intelligence, that the king of Tezcucó was come to visit the Spanish general in the name of the king of Mexico his uncle. It was not long before the king himself joined them, borne in a litter, adorned with fine feathers, on the shoulders of four of his domestics, and accompanied by a numerous and brilliant retinue of Mexican and Tezcucan nobility. As soon as he came in sight of the Spanish general, he alighted from the litter and began walking on foot, preceded by some of his servants, who industriously removed out of his way every thing which could either offend his feet or his sight. The Spaniards were astonished at this pomp, and from thence began to form conjectures of the parade and grandeur which must attend the king of Mexico. Cortes went to the door of his dwelling to meet him, and saluted him with a profound bow, which was returned by the king in touching the earth with his right hand and then lifting it to his mouth. He entered with an air of lordliness and majesty into one of the halls, sat himself down, congratulated the general and his officers on their happy arrival, and signified the particular pleasure his uncle the king of Mexico had in forming a friendship

(1) Solís confounds Amaquemecan with Ajotzínco; Amaquemecan was never situated, as he says, on the border of the lake, but at twelve miles distance from it, upon the side of a mountain.



ship and correspondence with the monarch of the East, by whom they were sent into that country ; but at the same time, he exaggerated the difficulties necessary to be overcome in order to go to court, and requested Cortes to change his resolution if he desired to please the king. Cortes answered, that if he returned back without delivering his embassy he would fail in his duty, and would give the utmost displeasure to his sovereign who had sent him, and particularly when he had found himself so near to the court after having surmounted the dangers of so long a journey. *If it is so*, said the king, *we will see each other at court* ; upon which taking polite leave, after being presented with some European toys, he left behind him a part of the nobility, that they might attend Cortes on his journey.

From Ajotzinco the Spaniards marched to Cuitlahuac, a city founded upon a little island in the lake of Chalco, which, though small, was accounted by Cortes the most beautiful he had hitherto seen. This city communicated with the main land by means of two large commodious roads, constructed on the lake ; the one to the south, which was two miles in length ; the other to the north, which was more than two miles in length. The Spaniards passed along, delighted to see the multitude and beauty of the cities situated on the lake, the temples and towers which rose above the other buildings, the trees and shrubbery which beautified the inhabited places, the fields and floating gardens of the lake, and the innumerable little vessels plying upon it ; but at the same time, not a little timorous at seeing themselves surrounded by an immense crowd of people, which collected there from all places to observe them ; on which account Cortes commanded his people to proceed in good

order and to be prepared for accidents, and cautioned the Indians not to obstruct the way nor come too near the ranks, unless they chose to be treated as enemies. In Cuitlahuac they were well accommodated and entertained. The lord of that city complained in secret to Cortes of the tyranny of the king of Mexico, entered into a confederacy with him, and informed him of the most convenient way to go to the court, and the consternation into which the oracles of the gods, the phenomena in the heavens, and the success of the Spanish arms, had thrown Montezuma.

From Cuitlahuac they proceeded by the other road of the lake towards Iztapalapan, but in the way Cortes was entertained with a new piece of good fortune. The prince Ixtlilxochitl finding that Cortes was not to make his journey through Calpolalpan, where he was waiting for him, resolved to meet him on the road to Iztapalapan: he marched with a considerable number of troops, and passed close to Tezcucó: this having been known to the prince Coanacotzin, his brother, who, since the rupture which, as we have already mentioned, happened three years before between them, had been totally alienated from him, either moved by fraternal affection, or led on by the hopes of the greater advantages to be derived from the union of both their interests, came also to meet with him upon this road: here they mutually exchanged sentiments, were reconciled, and united together in order to make a confederacy with the Spaniards. They travelled together until they came to Iztapalatenco, where they joined the strangers. Cortes, upon seeing so many armed troops, was a little uneasy, but being informed of the rank of the persons who were come to find him, and the motive

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tive of their coming, he went out to meet them, and the usual compliments having passed between them, the two princes invited him to the court of Tezcuco, to which he allowed himself to be easily persuaded to go, from the great service he hoped to gain by the prince Ixtlilxochitl, whose attachment to the Spaniards was now strongly apparent.

Tezcuco then, though somewhat inferior to Mexico in splendour and magnificence, was the largest and most populous city of the country of Anahuac: its population, including the cities of Huexotla, Coatlichan, and Atenco, which were so near as to appear like its suburbs, occupied one hundred and forty thousand houses: to the Spaniards it seemed twice as large as Seville. The grandeur of the temples and royal palaces, the beauty of the streets, the fountains and gardens, furnished ample variety of subject for their admiration. Cortes entered into this great city accompanied by the two princes and many of the Acolhuan nobility, amidst an infinite concourse of people. He was lodged with all his army in the principal palace of the king, where the treatment of his person was suitable to the dwelling. There the prince Ixtlilxochitl explained his pretended right to the kingdom of Acolhuacan, and his complaints against his brother Cacamatzin and the king of Mexico his uncle. Cortes promised to put him in possession of the throne, as soon as he had finished his negotiations in Mexico; and, without stopping in that court, he marched towards Iztapalapan.

Iztapalapan was a large and beautiful city, situated towards the point of that small peninsula which is between the two lakes of Chalco to the south and Tezcuco to the north: from this peninsula a road led to  
the



the little island of Mexico, which was paved for more than seven miles, and made on the lake many years before. The population of Iztapalapan consisted then of more than twelve thousand houses, built chiefly on several little islands contiguous to each other and the same peninsula, close to which were innumerable floating fields and gardens. This city was then governed by the prince Cuitlahuatzin, brother of Montezuma, and his immediate successor in the crown of Mexico, who, together with his other brother Matlatzincatzin lord of the city of Cojohuacan, received Cortes with the same ceremonies used by the other lords through whose cities he passed. He was complimented in an elegant harangue, and he, and his troops which accompanied him, lodged in his own palace. This was an extensive and most capacious edifice of stone and lime, fresh built, and not yet completed: besides many halls and chambers of excellent accommodation, the roofs of which were cedar, and the walls covered with fine cotton tapestry, and besides many large squares where the allied troops were quartered, it had a garden of surprising extent and beauty, already described by us when we treated of the agriculture of the Mexicans. After dinner the prince conducted his guests to this garden, where they received great recreation, and were impressed with a very elevated idea of Mexican magnificence. In this city the Spaniards observed, that instead of murmurings and complaints as elsewhere, they heard nothing but praises of the government; supposed to have been owing to the neighbourhood of the court, which made the inhabitants more-cautious in speaking.

The next day the Spaniards marched along that road which united, as we have already mentioned, Iztapalapan

pan with Mexico, which was intersected by seven small canals for the passage of boats from one lake to the other, and over these were wooden bridges for the convenience of passengers, which lifted up easily when it was necessary to obstruct the passage of an enemy. After having passed through Mexicaltzinco, and viewed Colhuacan, Huitzilopochco, Cojohuacan, and Mixcoac, cities all situated upon the borders of the lake, they arrived, amidst an immense concourse of people, at a place called *Xoloc*, where this and the road of Cojohuacan met each other. In the angle formed by these two roads, which is not more than half a league distant from the capital, there was a bastion with two little towers, surrounded by a wall more than ten feet high, with battlements, two entrances, and a draw-bridge; a place most memorable in the history of Mexico, from having been the camp of the Spanish general in the siege of that great city; there the army made a halt, to receive the compliments of more than a thousand Mexican nobles, all uniformly dressed, who, in passing before the Spanish general, made a bow with the usual ceremony of touching the earth and kissing the hand.

These compliments being over, in which the space of an hour was consumed, the Spaniards continued their course, all in as regular order as if they had been going to the field of battle. A little way before they reached the city, Cortes was informed that the king of Mexico was coming to meet him; and a little after he appeared, with a most numerous and noble attendance. Three nobles preceded, each holding up in his hand a golden rod, as the insignia of majesty, by which the people were advertised of the presence of their sovereign. Montezuma came richly clad in a litter covered with plates  
of

of gold, which four nobles bore on their shoulders, under the shade of a parasol of green feathers embroidered with fancy works of gold; he wore hanging from his shoulders a mantle adorned with the richest jewels of gold and precious stones, on his head a thin crown of the same metal, and upon his feet shoes of gold tied with strings of leather worked with gold and gems; he was accompanied by two hundred lords, dressed in a style superior to the other nobles, but all barefooted, two by two, keeping close on each side to the walls of the houses, to shew the respect they bore to their sovereign. As soon as the king and the Spanish general saw each other, both alighted, Cortes from his horse, and the king from his litter, who began to walk leaning on the arms of the king of Tezcucó and the lord of Iztapalapan. Cortes, after having made a profound bow to the king, approached him to put about his neck a small cord of gold, on which were strung glass beads which appeared like gems, and the king bowed his head to receive it (*m*); Cortes was also going to embrace him, but the two lords did not permit it. The general expressed in a short speech, as the circumstances required, his benevolence, his respect, and the pleasure he had in the knowledge of so great a monarch. Montezuma answered him in few words, and having performed the usual ceremony of touching the earth and kissing the hand, he in return for the present of the glass beads, gave him two necklaces of beautiful mother of pearl, from

(*m*) Solís, in his account of that meeting, makes four mistakes: 1. He says, that the present made by Cortes was not a band or chain of glass. 2. That those two lords who accompanied Montezuma did not permit Cortes to put it about his neck. 3. That they did it with some disdain. 4. That they were reprimanded by the king. The whole of this is false, invented at caprice, and contrary to the account given by Cortes himself.



from which hung some large cray-fish of gold in imitation of nature : he charged the prince Cuitlahuatzin to conduct Cortes to his dwelling, and he himself retired with the king of Tezcuco.

The nobility as well as the populace, who, from the tops, doors, and windows of the houses, were observing all that passed, were equally surprized and astonished at the sight of so many extraordinary objects presented to their eyes, and the unheard of complaisance of the king, which contributed much to raise the character of the Spaniards. The latter, full of wonder at seeing the grandeur of the city, the magnificence of the buildings, and the multitude of inhabitants, marched along that grand and spacious way, which, without varying the least from a right line, continued the road of Iztapalapan, built upon the lake, to the southern gate of the greater temple, admiration alternately giving way to fear in their minds for their fate, seeing so small a number of them in the center of a strange and populous kingdom. Thus they travelled on for near a mile and a half within the city, unto the palace destined for their reception, which formerly belonged to king Axajacatl, not far distant from the western gate of the same temple. Here Montezuma, who had gone before, waited for them. When Cortes arrived at the gate of that palace, Montezuma took him by the hand, led him into a large hall, made him sit down upon a foot-stool similar in form to those of the altars of the moderns, and covered with a fine tapestry of cotton, and close to a wall also covered with a tapestry embroidered with gold and gems; and, taking leave of him, said to him “ You and your companions are now “ in your own house, refresh “ and repose yourselves ; I will return shortly.”

The

The king went to his palace, and Cortes immediately ordered a volley of all the artillery to be fired, in order to awe and intimidate the Mexicans by the sound: in the mean while, he went to see all the chambers of the palace where his people were to lodge. This edifice was so large, that both the Spaniards and their allies, who, together with their women and servants whom they brought with them, exceeded seven thousand in number, were accommodated in it; every where there was the greatest cleanliness and neatness, almost all the chambers had beds of mats, of rushes, and palm, according to the custom, and other mats in a round form for pillows, with coverlets of fine cotton, and seats made of single pieces of wood; some chambers had the floor covered with mats, and the walls also covered with tapestries of cotton of various colours. The walls were moderately thick, and at certain distances there were little towers; the Spaniards therefore found every thing which they could wish for their security. The indefatigable and cautious general immediately distributed his guards, placed a battery of his cannon facing the gate of the palace, and took as much care to fortify himself as if he had expected to be assaulted that night by his enemies. That day there was a magnificent entertainment prepared for Cortes and his officers, and served by the nobility, and for the rest of the army were brought various and abundant provisions, though of an inferior quality. This day, not more memorable to the Spaniards than to the Mexicans, was the eighth day of November, 1519, seven months after their arrival in the country of Anahuac.

## BOOK IX.

*Conferences of king Montezuma with the Spanish general; imprisonment of the kings of Mexico and Acolhuacan, and other lords; cruel punishment of Quauhpopoca; attempts of the governor of Cuba against Cortes, and the defeat of Panfilo Narvaez; the killing of many of the nobles, and insurrection of the people against the Spaniards; battle of Otompan, and retreat of the Spaniards to Tlascalas; election of king Cuitlahuatzin; victories of the Spaniards in Tepejacac, in Xaltatzinco, in Tecamachalco, and in Quauquechollan; havoc made by the small-pox; death of king Cuitlahuatzin, and the princes Maxizcatzin and Cuicuitzcatzin; election in Mexico of the king Quauhquemotzin.*

AFTER the Spaniards had dined and ordered every thing necessary for their security, the king returned, accompanied by many of the nobility to visit them. Cortes came to meet him along with his officers, and both parties entered together into the principal hall, where they quickly placed another footstool close to that of the Spanish general. The king presented to him many curious pieces of work of gold, silver, and feathers, and more than five thousand very fine dresses of cotton. Having at last sat himself down, he made Cortes sit down also, while every other person remained standing. Cortes in lofty expressions protested his gratitude to him, and as he was proceeding in his discourse Montezuma interrupted him with these words: “ Brave



“ general, and you his companions, all my domestics and  
“ courtiers are witnesses of the pleasure I have received  
“ from your happy arrival at this court ; and if, hither-  
“ to, there has been any appearance of a wish to oppose  
“ it, so much has only been done to humour my subjects.  
“ Your fame has enlarged objects and alarmed minds.  
“ It was reported that you were immortal gods ; that  
“ you came mounted on wild beasts of tremendous size  
“ and fierceness ; and, that you darted thunder with  
“ which the earth trembled : some related that you were  
“ monsters thrown up by the sea ; that the insatiable  
“ thirst of gold made you abandon your native country ;  
“ that you were greatly addicted to pleasures ; and such  
“ gluttons, that one of you eat as much as ten of us :  
“ but all these errors are dissipated by the experience  
“ which my subjects have had of you ; now it is known  
“ that you are mortal men like us, although differing  
“ in complexion and beard ; we have now seen with our  
“ own eyes that those wild beasts so renowned, are only  
“ stags more corpulent than ours ; and that your pre-  
“ tended thunder and lightning are only a more artifi-  
“ cial species of shooting tubes, whose balls are pushed  
“ with more force, and do more hurt than ours : with  
“ regard to your personal qualifications, we are well  
“ informed by those who have had communication with  
“ you, that you are kind and generous, that you pa-  
“ tiently endure misfortunes, that you are not disposed  
“ to severity, unless against those who provoke your  
“ anger by hostilities, nor make use of your arms but in  
“ defence of your persons.

“ I do not doubt that you will in like manner have  
“ banished from your minds, or that you soon will banish,  
“ those false ideas with which you may have been im-  
“ pressed

“ pressed by the flattery of my vassals or the adulation  
“ of my enemies : some of them may have told you that  
“ I am one of the gods, and that I put on at pleasure the  
“ form of a lion, a tyger, or any other animal ; but now  
“ you see (taking hold with his fingers of the skin of his  
“ arm) that I am of flesh and bone like other mortals,  
“ although more noble by birth and more powerful  
“ from the elevation of my rank. The Chempoallese,  
“ who, under your protection, have renounced obedi-  
“ ence to me (although their rebellion shall not pass  
“ unpunished) will have made you believe, that the walls  
“ and roofs of my palaces are of gold, but your own  
“ eyes have now undeceived you : this is one of my  
“ palaces, and you here see that the walls are made of  
“ stone and lime, and the roofs of wood. I will not  
“ deny that my riches are great, but they are exag-  
“ gerated by my subjects : some of them will have com-  
“ plained to you of my cruelty and tyranny ; but they  
“ term the lawful exercise of the supreme authority  
“ tyranny, and call that cruelty which is but the neces-  
“ sary rigour of justice.

“ Abandoning therefore all false conceptions occasion-  
“ ed to either of us by unjust representations, I accept  
“ the embassy of your king who sends you ; I respect  
“ his friendship, and offer all my kingdom to his obe-  
“ dience ; since from the signs we have observed in the  
“ heavens, and what we have seen in you, the period  
“ seems to be arrived when the predictions of our an-  
“ cestors are to be fulfilled, that is, that there were to  
“ come from the quarter of the East, certain men differ-  
“ ent in habit and in customs from us, who were to  
“ become lords of all this country ; for we are not the  
“ original people of this land. It is not many years  
“ since

“ since our ancestors came here from the regions of the  
 “ North, and we have not ruled these people but as the  
 “ viceroys of Quetzalcoatl our god and lawful sove-  
 “ reign.”

Cortes answered, by thanking him warmly for the singular kindneſſes he had hitherto received from him, and for the honourable idea he had formed of the Spaniards. He told him he was ſent by the greateſt monarch of Europe, who, although he might aſpire to ſomething higher in virtue of his being the deſcendant of Quetzalcoatl, nevertheleſs, he contented himſelf with eſtabliſhing a confederacy and perpetual friendſhip with his majeſty and his ſucceſſors; that the end of his embaſſy was not to take away from any one that which he poſſeſſed, but that of announcing a true religion, and communicating ſome important information which would improve his government, and render his vaſſals happy; this he would do upon another occaſion, if his majeſty would vouchſafe to hear him. The king aſſented to his propoſal, and having informed himſelf of the rank and condition of every one of the Spaniards, he took leave, and ſome little time after he ſent them a large preſent, conſiſting of ſome works of gold, and three bales of fine feathers, dreſſes for each of the officers, and two bales of dreſſes of fine cotton for each of the ſoldiers. This proſperous beginning might have ſecured to the Spaniards the quiet poſſeſſion of all that vaſt monarchy, if they had conducted themſelves with prudence equal to their courage (*n*).

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(*n*) The learned and judicious Acoſta, treating of the firſt conference with Montezuma, in book vii. chap. 25. of his hiſtory ſays, “ Many are of opinion  
 “ that conſidering the ſtate of things on that firſt day, it would have been  
 “ eaſy for the Spaniards to have done with the king and the kingdom what-  
 “ ever they pleaſed, and to have communicated to them the law of Jeſus  
 “ Chriſt with peace and contentment to all.” &c.



The next day Cortes being desirous to pay his visit to the king, sent to demand an audience, and obtained it so speedily, that those who brought him the answer of the king were the persons themselves appointed to introduce ambassadors, and were to conduct him and instruct him in the ceremonials of that court. Cortes dressed himself in his most splendid habit, and took along with him the captains Alvavarado, Sandoval, Velasquez, and Ordaz, and also five soldiers. They proceeded to the royal palace, amidst an immense multitude of people, and as soon as they reached the first gate, the persons who accompanied them ranged themselves in two files, one on each side of them, as it was deemed a want of respect to majesty to enter in a crowded manner. After passing through three courts, and some halls, to the last anti-chamber in order to come at the hall of audience, they were politely received by several lords who kept guard, and were forced to put off their shoes, and to cover their pompous dresses with some coarse garments. When they entered the hall of audience, the king made some steps towards Cortes and took him by the hand, and giving a look of kindness to all the rest, he made them all sit down. Their conference was long on different subjects. The king asked several questions concerning the government and natural productions of Spain; and Cortes, after having satisfied him in every thing, artfully led the discourse upon matters of religion. He explained to him the unity of God, the creation of the world, the severity of the judgments of God, the glory with which he rewards the just, and the eternal punishments to which he condemns the wicked. Then he spoke of the rites of Christianity, and in particular of the pure and unbloody sacrifice of the mass; to draw a comparison between it  
and

and the inhuman sacrifices of the Mexicans, declaiming warmly against the barbarous cruelty of sacrificing human victims, and feeding on their flesh. Montezuma answered, that with respect to the creation of the world they were of one sentiment ; as that which Cortes had just said had been communicated to him by his ancestors ; that as to the rest he had already been informed by his ambassadors of the religion of the Spaniards. I, however, he added, do not doubt of the goodness of the God whom you adore ; but if he is kind to Spain, our gods are equally so to Mexico, as the experience of many centuries has shewn to us. Spare yourselves therefore the trouble of endeavouring to induce me to leave their worship. With regard to our sacrifices, I do not know why we are to be blamed for sacrificing to the gods those men, who either on account of their own crimes, or from their fate in war, are destined to death. But although Cortes did not succeed in converting him to the Christian religion, he obtained a promise, as has been affirmed, that there never should be any human flesh prepared for the royal table, either because the reason urged by Cortes against it, awakened in his mind the horror natural at such food, or because he was desirous of shewing compliance with the Spaniards in some of their demands. On this occasion also he displayed the royal beneficence towards them, presenting to Cortes, and his four officers, several labours of gold, and ten bales of fine dresses of cotton, and a golden necklace to every soldier.

Cortes having returned to his quarters (for thus we may hereafter name the palace of Axajacatl where the Spaniards were lodged,) he began to reflect on the danger which surrounded him in the heart of a city so strong  
and

and populous, and resolved to conciliate the minds of the nobles by good conduct, obsequious and kind manners, and ordered his people to behave themselves with so much guard and discretion that the Mexicans might have nothing to complain of: but while he appeared to watch with diligence to keep peace, he was revolving in his mind most daring and rash designs, totally adverse to tranquillity; and in order to bring them to maturity, it being necessary to inform himself with his own eyes of the fortifications of Mexico, and the forces of the Mexicans, he demanded permission of the king to visit the royal palaces, the greater temple, and the square of the market. The king cheerfully granted his request, unsuspecting of the crafty general, nor foresaw the consequences of his great indulgence. The Spaniards saw all they wished to see, and found every where new subjects of admiration.

The city of Mexico was then situated, as we have already said, upon a small island in the lake of Tezcuco, fifteen miles to the westward from that court, and four to the eastward from that of Tlacopan. For the convenience of passing to the main land, there were three great causeways of earth and stone, raised in the lake. That of Iztapalapan, towards the south, upwards of seven miles; that of Tlacopan, towards the west, about two miles; and that of Tepejacac, towards the north, of three miles in length (*p*); and all three so broad, that ten men

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(*p*) Dr. Robertson puts instead of the road of Tepejacac, that of Tezcuco, which, in the part where he describes Mexico, he places towards the north-west, and when he speaks of the posts of the Spanish forces at the siege of that capital, he places it towards the east: though he has already said, that there was no road upon the lake towards the east: but there never was, nor could be, any road on the lake from Mexico to Tezcuco, on account of the prodigious depth of its bed in that part; and if there could have been any, it would not have been only three miles as this author affirms, but fifteen miles in length, which is the distance between them.



on horseback could pass abreast. Besides these three roads, there was another somewhat narrower for the two aqueducts of Chapoltepec. The circumference of the city, exclusive of the suburbs, measured more than ten miles, and the number of houses were at least sixty thousand (*q*). The city was divided into four quarters, and each quarter into several districts, the Mexican names of which are still preserved among the Indians. The dividing lines of the four quarters, were the four broad roads, leading from the four gates of the area of the greater temple. The first quarter called *Tecpan*, now St. Paul, comprehended all that part between the two roads leading from the southern and eastern gates. The second *Mojotla*, now St. John, the part between the southern and western roads. The third *Tlaquechiuhcan*, now St. Mary, the part between the western and northern roads; and the fourth *Alzacualco*, now St. Sebastian, the part of the city between the roads which led from the northern and eastern gates. To those four parts into which the city was divided from the time of its foundation, the city of Tlatelolco was added as a fifth, situated towards the north-west, having been united after the

(*q*) Torquemada affirms, that the population of the capital amounted to one hundred and twenty thousand houses; but the anonymous conqueror, Gomara, Herrera, and other historians, agree in the number of sixty thousand houses, not that of sixty thousand inhabitants, as Robertson says; for no ancient author computed them so few in number. It is true, that in the Italian translation of the relation of the anonymous conqueror we read *sessante mila abitanti*; but this has been without doubt, a mistake of the translator, who having, perhaps; found in the original *sesenta mil Vecinos*, translated it sixty thousand *abitanti*, when he ought to have said *fuochi*; because, otherwise Cholula, Xochomilco, Iztapalapan, and other such cities would be made greater than Mexico. But in the above mentioned number the suburbs are not included. It appears that Torquemada included the suburbs, but still his calculation appears excessive.

the conquest of king Axajacatl to Tenochtitlan, and both together formed Mexico.

Around the city there were many dykes and reservoirs for collecting water when it was necessary; and within it so many canals, that there was hardly a district which could not be approached by boats; a circumstance which did not less contribute to embellish the city, and to make the transportation of provisions, and all other commodities of traffick easy, than to give the citizens security from the attempts of their enemies. Although the principal streets were broad and straight, of many others, some were mere canals, where there was no passing but in boats; others were paved and free of water, and some had a small channel between two terraces, which served for the convenience of passengers, and for the unloading of vessels, or were little gardens planted with trees and flowers.

Among the various buildings of the city, besides many temples and magnificent royal palaces, of which we have already spoken, there were other palaces, or great houses, which the feudatory lords had constructed for their habitation during the time which they were occasionally obliged to reside at court. Almost all the houses, except those of the poor, had balconies with parapets, and some of them even battlements and towers, though much smaller than those of the temples: so that upon the whole, the Mexicans provided for their defence in their streets and houses as well as their temples.

Besides the large and famous square of Tlatelolco, where the principal market was held, there were other little market-places distributed through the city, where they sold ordinary provisions. There were also in different places fountains and fish-ponds, particularly near

to the temples, and many gardens, part laid out on the natural level of the earth, and part raised into high terrasses.

The many and great buildings, neatly whitened and polished, the lofty towers of the temples, scattered through the four quarters of the city, the canals, trees, and gardens, formed an assemblage of objects so beautiful, that the Spaniards appeared never satisfied with viewing it, particularly when they beheld it from the upper area of the greater temple, which not only commanded a prospect of all the extent of Mexico, but also of the lake, and the beautiful and populous cities around it. They were not less astonished at seeing the royal palaces, and the wonderful variety of plants and animals which were reared there; but nothing struck their minds with more amazement than the large square of the market. There was not a Spaniard who did not extol it with singular praises, and some of them, who had travelled through almost all Europe, declared, as Bernal Diaz reports, that they had never seen in any place of the world, either so great a number of merchants, or such a variety of merchandize so well ordered and disposed.

When the Spaniards mounted the greater temple, they found the king there, who had anticipated their arrival, in order to prevent by his presence, any attempt of violence against his gods. After having observed the city from that great height, at the instance of the king himself, Cortes demanded permission to see the sanctuaries, which the king granted to him after consulting the priests. The Spaniards entered there, and contemplated, not without compassion and horror, the blindness of those people, and the horrid slaughter which superstition committed at their sacrifices. Cortes then turning to the

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the king said, "I wonder, prince, that a monarch, so wise as you are, can adore those abominable figures of the devil as gods." "If I had known," answered the king, "that you would have spoken disrespectfully of our gods, I should not have yielded to your request." Cortes, seeing him so much incensed, begged his excuse, and took leave to withdraw to his quarters. "Go in peace," said the king; "for I will stay here to appease the anger of our gods, which you have provoked by your blasphemy."

Notwithstanding this circumstance of disgust, Cortes not only obtained permission from the king to build within the enclosure of his quarters a chapel in honour of his god, but also the workmen and materials for the building, in which they celebrated mass, although without wine, and the soldiers daily assembled there to perform their devotions. He fixed also, in the principal court, a great cross, that the Mexicans might see the high veneration in which they held that symbol of their religion. He was moreover desirous of consecrating the very sanctuary of Huitzilopochtli to the worship of his god, but at that time he was restrained by respect for the king and the priests; but he accomplished this purpose some months after, having acquired a greater authority by the imprisonment of the king, and other actions not more prudent or less rash, as will presently appear.

He broke the idols which were worshipped there, made them clean and adorn the sanctuary, placed a crucifix and an image of the mother of God in it, and placing himself upon his knees before those sacred images, he thanked the Almighty for having granted leave to adore him in that place, so long destined to cruel and detestable idolatry. His pious zeal made him frequently repeat to Montezuma

tezuma his arguments for the truth of his religion ; but although Montezuma was not disposed to embrace it, moved however by his suggestions, he commanded that from that time forward no human victims should be sacrificed ; and although he did not agree with the Spanish general in renouncing idolatry, he continued to caress him, and no day passed without his making some present to, and shewing new civilities to the Spaniards. The order which the king gave respecting the sacrifices were not strictly observed, and that great harmony, which had hitherto subsisted, was disturbed by the daring attempts of the Spanish general.

Six days were hardly elapsed after the entry of the Spaniards into Mexico, when Cortes, finding himself, as it were, insulated in the centre of an immense myriad of people, and considering how dangerous their situation would become, if the mind of the king should ever change, which event might happen, was persuaded there was no other conduct to be followed for their security than to make himself master of the person of the king ; but such a measure being extremely repugnant to justice and reason, which demanded from him both respect to the majesty of that monarch, and gratitude for his great beneficence, he sought for pretences to quiet his conscience, and to shield his honour ; for which purpose he found none so fitting as the revolutions at Vera Cruz, the intelligence of which he had kept secret in his breast till this time, but being willing now to avail himself of it, he revealed it to his officers, that they might take into their serious consideration what would be most proper and effectual to deliver themselves from such imminent danger ; and, in order to justify his attempt, and excite the Spaniards to execute it, he made some principal

pal persons of the allies be called (whose information ought always to be suspicious, on account of their bitter enmity to the Mexicans), and demanded of them if they had observed any thing new in the inhabitants of that court? They replied, that the Mexican populace was then amused with the public rejoicings, which the king had ordered, to celebrate the arrival of such noble strangers; but that amongst the nobility they perceived a suspicious look; and, among other things, they had heard them say, that it would be easy to lift up the bridges upon the canals, which seemed to indicate some secret conspiracy against the Spaniards.

Cortes could not sleep from uneasiness that whole night, and passed it traversing his quarters in deep meditation. A centinel told him, that in one of the chambers there was a door which had been fresh walled up. Cortes made it be opened, and upon entering they found several chambers, where the treasure of the deceased king was deposited. He saw there many idols, a great quantity of works of gold, of gems, of feathers, of cotton, and several other things which were paid by the tributary provinces, or presented by the feudatory lords to their sovereign. After beholding with amazement so much riches, he made the door be again walled up, and left in its former state.

The next morning he called together his captains, represented to them the hostilities committed by the lord of Nauhtlan upon the garrison at Vera Cruz and the Totonacas their allies, which the allies themselves said would not have been offered without the express order or permission of the king of Mexico. He painted, in strong colours, the danger in which they then stood, and declared his design to them, exaggerating the advantages  
which



which were to be expected from the execution of it, and diminishing the evils which it might occasion. Their opinions were various. Some of them rejected the proposition of the general as rash and impracticable, and said, that it would be fitter to ask permission from the king to retire from the country, since as he had endeavoured, with so much earnestness, and such large presents, to turn them from their resolution of coming to Mexico, he would promptly consent to their departure. Some of them thought, that although it was necessary for them to depart, yet they imagined that it would be proper to do it secretly, in order to give the Mexicans no opportunity of betraying them in any manner; but the greater part of them having, it is probable, been previously biased by the general, embraced his proposal, rejecting the others as more dangerous and ignominious. “What will they say of us?” they asked, “when they see us go suddenly from a court where we have been crowned with honour; who will not be persuaded that it is fear which chafes us away? If we ever lose the reputation of courage, what security can we promise ourselves, either in those places of the Mexicans through which we must pass, or among our allies, who will no longer be restrained by respect for our arms?” At last, the resolution was formed to take Montezuma in his palace, and to bring him prisoner to their quarters; a resolution most barbarous, however, and wild to excess, suggested by apprehensions for their fate, and their past uniform experience of success, which, more than any thing else, encourages men, and leads them gradually on always to some still more daring undertaking.

For the execution of this dangerous plan, Cortes put all his troops in arms, and stationed them at proper places.

ces. He commanded five of his officers and twenty-five of his soldiers, in whom he placed chief confidence, to repair two by two to the palace, but in such a manner that they might all meet there at once, as if by accident; and having previously obtained leave of the king, he went himself with his interpreter Marina, at the usual hour of his visit to him. He was introduced with the other Spaniards into the hall of audience, where the king, far from suspecting what was to happen, received them with his wonted kindness. He made them sit down, presented to them some works of gold, and besides presented one of his daughters to Cortes. Cortes, after having expressed his gratitude, in the most polite terms, apologised for not accepting her, alleging that he was married in Cuba, and according to the Christian law, he was not permitted to have two wives; but at last he received her into his company, to avoid giving disgust to the king, and to have an opportunity of making her a Christian, as he afterwards did. To the other officers also he gave some daughters of Mexican lords of those he had in his seraglio. They conversed afterwards, for some time, on various subjects; but Cortes, seeing that those discourses diverted him from his object, told the king that his visit then was made to communicate to him the proceedings of his vassal the lord of Nauhtlan: he complained of the hostilities committed by that lord on the Totonacas, on account of their friendship with the Spaniards; of the war made on the Spaniards at Vera Cruz, and the death of Escalante the governor, and six soldiers of that garrison. "I (he added) must give an account to my sovereign of the death of those Spaniards; and in order to be able to give him proper satisfaction, I have made enquiry into so singular  
" lar

“ lar an event. All confider you the principal author of  
“ those revolutions ; but I am far from thinking fo great  
“ a monarch capable of fuch perfidy as to perfecute me  
“ as an enemy in that province, while at the fame time  
“ you are heaping favours upon me in your court.” “ I  
“ do not doubt (replied the king) but those who accuse  
“ me of the war of Nauhtlan are the Tlafcalans, my  
“ fworn enemies ; but I proteft I had no influence in it.  
“ Quauhpopoca has proceeded to do fo without my or-  
“ ders, and rather againft my inclination ; and that you  
“ may be affured of the truth, I will make him immedi-  
“ ately come to court, and put him into your hands.”  
He immediately called two of his courtiers, and deliver-  
ing to them a certain gem, which he always wore hang-  
ing at his arm, and ferved in place of a feal as a fign of  
his commands, he ordered them to go with all poffible  
speed to Nauhtlan to bring Quauhpopoca from thence to  
court, and the other principal perfons who were con-  
cerned in the death of the Spaniards, and gave them au-  
thority to raife troops, and take them by force if they  
fhould refufe to obey.

The two courtiers departed immediately to execute  
their commiffion, and the king faid to Cortes, “ What  
“ can I do more to affure you of my fincerity ?” “ I  
“ have no doubt of it (answered Cortes) ; but in order  
“ to clear up the error into which your vaffals have like-  
“ wife fallen, that the affair of Nauhtlan had been ex-  
“ ecuted by your orders, we wifh for a ftrong proof of  
“ it, which will manifef your benevolence towards us ;  
“ and no one feems more adapted for this purpofe than  
“ that of your condefcending to live with us until the  
“ guilty perfons appear, and manifef your innocence by  
“ their confeffion. That will be fufficient to fatisfy my  
“ fovereign,



“sovereign, to justify your conduct, to honour and shelter us under the shade of your majesty.” In spite of the artful words in which Cortes endeavoured to disguise his daring and injurious pretension, the king immediately penetrated his meaning, and was disturbed. “When was there ever an instance (he said) of a king tamely suffering himself to be led into prison? And although I was willing to debase myself in so vile a manner, would not all my vassals immediately arm themselves to set me free? I am not a man who can hide myself, or fly to the mountains; without subjecting myself to such infamy, I am here now ready to satisfy your complaints.” “The house, prince (returned Cortes), to which we invite you, is one of your palaces; nor will it excite the wonder of your subjects, who are accustomed to your change of habitation, to see you now go to inhabit the palace of your deceased father Axajacatl, from a motive of shewing your benevolence towards us. In case your subjects afterwards should dare to do any thing against you or us, we have enough of courage, strong arms, and good weapons, to repel their violence. In other respects I engage my faith you shall be as much honoured and attended upon by us as by your own subjects.” The king persevered in his refusal, and Cortes in his importunity; until at last, one of the Spanish officers, extremely daring and impetuous, not brooking this delay to the execution of their project, said, in passion, that they should leave discouraging, and resolve to take him by force, or put him to death. The king, who discerned in the aspect of the Spaniard, what was his purpose, eagerly demanded of Marina what that furious stranger said? “I, prince (she answered with mildness and discretion,)

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cretion), “ as your subject, desire your happiness ; but  
“ as the confidant of those men, know their secrets, and  
“ am acquainted with their character. If you conde-  
“ scend to do what they require, you will be treated by  
“ them with all the honour which is due to your royal  
“ person ; but if you persist in your refusal, your life  
“ will be in danger.” That unhappy king, who from  
the time that he had the first intelligence of the arrival  
of the Spaniards, had been struck with a superstitious  
panick, and had become daily more pusillanimous, seeing  
himself in such difficulty, and being persuaded that be-  
fore his guards could come to his succour he might pe-  
rish by the hands of men so daring and resolute, at last  
yielded to their importunity. “ I am willing to trust  
“ myself with you ; let us go, let us go, since the gods  
“ thus intend ;” and immediately he ordered his litter  
to be prepared, and he got into it, in order to be trans-  
ported to the quarters of the Spaniards.

Our readers will probably, on reading and consider-  
ing all the circumstances of this extraordinary event, feel  
the same displeasure we feel in giving the relation ; as  
the Spaniards cannot but appear to have been the se-  
verest instruments fate ever made use of to farther the  
ends of Providence in the discovery and connection of the  
new with the old continent.

Montezuma, at length, left his palace never to return  
to it again. He departed, declaring to his courtiers, for  
certain reasons, after consultation with his gods, he was  
going to pass some days, of his own free will, with those  
strangers, commanding them to publish it through all  
the city. He went with all the pomp and magnificence  
with which he usually appeared in public, and the Spa-  
niards kept close to him, guarding him, under pretence  
of

of doing him honour. The news this singular event immediately spread through the whole capital, and the people assembled in crowds ; some were affected so as to weep, and others threw themselves upon the ground in despair. The king attempted to console them, telling them, that it was with his own pleasure, that he went to be among his friends ; but being apprehensive of some disorder, he gave orders to his ministers to chase the rabble from the streets, and threatened death to any one who caused any commotion or disturbance. Having arrived at the quarters, he caressed the Spaniards, and took the apartments that pleased him most, which his domestics quickly decorated with the finest tapestry of cotton and feathers, and the best furniture of the royal palace. Cortes placed guards at the entry to those apartments, and doubled those which were usual for the security of their quarters. He intimated to all the Spaniards and all the allies, that they were to treat him and serve him with all the respect which was due to majesty, and permitted the Mexicans to visit him whenever they pleased, provided there were but few at a time ; so that he wanted nothing that he had in his own palace but liberty.

Here Montezuma was allowed to give free audience to his vassals, heard their petitions, pronounced sentences, and governed the kingdom with the assistance of his ministers and counsellors. His domestics served him with the same diligence and punctuality as usual. A band of nobles waited upon him at table, ordered in ranks of four at a time, carrying the dishes raised up in their hands for the sake of ostentation ; after having chosen what he liked, he divided the rest among the Spaniards who assisted and the Mexican nobles who attended him : not contented



tented with this, his generosity made him distribute frequent and magnificent presents among the Spaniards.

Cortes, on his part, shewed so much earnestness that his people should pay him the respect which was due, that he ordered a Spaniard to be whipped for answering the king rudely, and would have made him be hanged, as some historians affirm, if the king himself had not interposed in his behalf. But if the soldier was deserving of chastisement for insulting the majesty of that king by a rude word, what punishment did he merit who had so outrageously deprived him of his liberty? Every time that Cortes went to visit him he observed the same ceremony, and paid him the same compliments which he had been used to do when he went to the royal palace. In order to amuse him in prison, he made the soldiers go through the military exercise, or made them play at games before him; and the king himself frequently condescended to play with Cortes and the captain Alvarado, at a game which the Spaniards called *bodoque*, and shewed himself happy to lose in order to have an opportunity of exercising his liberality; once after dinner he lost forty pieces of unwrought gold, which, as near as we can guess, was equal to one hundred and sixty ounces at least.

Cortes perceiving his liberality, or rather prodigality, told him one day that some knavish soldiers had stolen some pieces of gold from the treasury of his deceased father Axajacatl, but that he would make them immediately restore the whole of their theft. "Provided," said the king, "they do not touch the images of the gods, nor any thing destined for their worship, they may take as much as they please." Having got this permission, the Spaniards took out soon after more than  
a thou-

a thousand fine habits of cotton ; Cortes commanded them to be replaced, but Montezuma opposed it, saying he never took back what he had once given away. Cortes also imprisoned some soldiers, because they had taken out of the same treasure a certain quantity of liquid amber ; but, at the desire of the king, they were again set at liberty. Montezuma, not contented with yielding up his riches to the Spaniards, presented to Cortes another of his daughters, whom the general accepted, in order to marry her to Christopher Olid, camp-master to the Spanish troops. This princess, as well as the other formerly presented, were immediately instructed and baptized, without any opposition from their father.

Cortes, having no longer any doubt of the friendly disposition of the king, which had been manifested not only by his extraordinary liberality, but also by the pleasure he took in living among the Spaniards, after some days of confinement allowed him to go out of the quarters, and exhorted him to go as often as he pleased to amuse himself with the chase, of which he was immoderately fond. That debased monarch did not refuse this miserable use of his liberty ; he went frequently, sometimes to the temples to perform his devotions, sometimes to the lake to catch water-fowl, sometimes to the wood of Chapoltepec, or some other place of pleasure ; always guarded, however, by a strong company of Spanish soldiers. When he went upon the lake, he was escorted by a vast number of boats, or by two brigantines, which Cortes had caused to be built as soon as he entered that capital (*r*). When he resorted to the woods,

(*r*) In order to set forth at once the life of Montezuma while in prison, we recount here some events which happened posterior to others, which are still to be related.

woods, he was accompanied by two thousand Tlascalans, besides a numerous retinue of Mexicans, who always were in attendance to serve him ; but he never passed a night out of the quarters.

Upwards of fifteen days had elapsed since the imprisonment of the king, when the two messengers returned from Nauhtlan, conducting Quauhpopoca, his son, and fifteen other nobles, accomplices in the death of the governor Escalante. Quauhpopoca came richly dressed, in a litter : when he arrived at the quarters he pulled off his shoes, according to the ceremony of the palace, and covered himself with a coarse habit ; he was introduced to the audience of the king, and, having observed the usual forms of respect, he said, “ Behold, most great  
“ and powerful prince, your servant obedient to your  
“ commands, and ready to comply in every thing with  
“ your desire.” “ You have conducted yourself not a  
“ little amiss in this point,” returned the king, with disdain, “ by treating those strangers, whom I have received like friends into my court, as enemies ; and your  
“ temerity has been excessive, in blaming me as the author of such proceedings ; you shall therefore be punished as a traitor to your sovereign.” Quauhpopoca endeavoured to excuse himself, but the king would not listen to him, and made him be immediately delivered up to Cortes, with his accomplices, that, after the crime was examined into, he might punish them as he should think proper. Cortes put the necessary questions, and they openly confessed the fact, without at first blaming the king ; until being threatened with the torture, and believing their punishment inevitable, they declared that what they had done was enjoined by the king, without  
whose



whose orders they would not have dared to attempt any thing against the Spaniards.

Cortes, after hearing their confession and pretending not to believe their excuse, condemned them to be burned alive before the royal palace, for being guilty of treason to the king. He repaired immediately to the king's apartment, with three or four of his officers, and a soldier who carried irons in his hands; and, without omitting even upon this occasion the usual ceremony and compliments, he said to the king, "The delinquents, prince, have now been examined, and all of them have confessed their guilt, and blame you as the author of the death of my Spaniards: I have condemned them to the punishment which they, and which you also, deserve, agreeably to their confession; but, in consideration of the many kindnesses you have rendered us hitherto, and the regard you have manifested for my sovereign and towards my nation, I am willing to grant you the favour of your life, although I cannot avoid making you feel a part of the punishment which you merit for your crime." Upon saying this, he, in an angry tone, commanded the soldier to put the irons upon his legs, and without deigning to hear a word from him, turned about and departed. The stupefaction of the king at seeing this outrage offered to his person was so great, that it left him no power of resistance nor any words to express his affliction: he remained for some time in a state of insensibility; his domestics who attended signified their grief in silent tears; and throwing themselves at his feet, eased the weight of the irons with their hands, and endeavoured to prevent their contact with his legs by placing bandages of cotton between them. As he returned to himself, he broke out into  
some

some expressions of impatience, but he soon calmed again, attributing his miseries to the supreme dispensations of his gods.

This bold action was hardly performed, when Cortes proceeded to execute another not less presumptuous. After having given orders to the guards not to admit any Mexican to see the king, he commanded Quauhpopoca, his son, and the rest of his accomplices, to be led to punishment; they were conducted by the Spaniards themselves, all armed and formed in order of battle, to keep the people in awe in case they should be willing to oppose the execution of their sentence. But what could that small troop of men have done against the immense multitude of Mexicans who assembled to be spectators of the event? The fire was kindled before the principal palace of the king. The fuel made use of was a great quantity of bows, arrows, darts, lances, swords, and shields, which were taken from an armoury; for Cortes had demanded these of the king, that he might rid himself of the uneasiness which the sight of so many arms occasioned. Quauhpopoca, tied hand and foot and placed upon the pile where he was to be burned, again protested his innocence, and repeated that what he had done was by the express order of his king; he then made prayers to his gods, and encouraged his companions to bear their sufferings. The fire being kindled they were all in a few minutes consumed, (s) in sight of a numerous  
multitude

(s) Solis, when he makes mention of the sentence of Cortes against Quauhpopoca, speaks thus “ Juzgose militarmente la causa, y se les dio sentencia de “ muerte, con la circunstancia de que fuisen quemados publicamente sus cuerpos.” Wherein, without mentioning the species of punishment to which they were condemned, he makes it be understood, that the prisoners were not burned, but their dead bodies only. This is not at all consistent with the sincerity  
which

multitude, who made no commotion because they were persuaded, as is probable, that this punishment was executed by order of the king: and it is to be imagined that the sentence had been published in his name.

This conduct of Cortes is by no means to be justified, since besides arrogating to himself an authority which did not belong to him, if he believed the king had been the author of the revolutions at Vera Cruz, why condemn to death, and to so cruel a death, men who had no other guilt than that of executing punctually the orders of their sovereign? If he did not believe the king guilty, why subject him to so much ignominy, in contradiction to the respect due to his character, the gratitude which might naturally have been felt for his bounty, and the justice claimed by his innocence? It is probable, that Quauhpopoca had an express order from the king to bring the Totonacas again under obedience to his crown, and that being unable to execute that order without embroiling himself with the Spaniards, who protected the rebels, he carried things to the extremity which we have seen.

As soon as the criminals were punished, Cortes went to the apartment of the king, and saluting him with expressions of affection, and boasting the favour which he had done him in granting him his life, he made his fetters be taken off. The joy which Montezuma then felt, was proportioned to the anguish the ignominy had excited; he lost all his fears of having his life taken from him, and received this phantom of liberty as an incom-

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parable

which is requisite from an historian. He studied to dissemble whatever did not conform with the panegyric of his hero; but his dissimulation is of but little consequence, while not only other historians, but even Cortes himself affirms it openly, in his letter to Charles V. See in particular Herrera, in his Decad II. book viii. chap. 9,



parable benefit; he was so fallen in dignity and spirit, that he embraced Cortes with the utmost affection, expressed his gratitude to him in the strongest terms, and that day shewed extraordinary complaisance to the Spaniards and his own vassals. Cortes took off his guard, and told the king that whenever he pleased he might return to his palace; well assured, however, the king would not accept his offer; for he had frequently heard him say, that it would not be fitting for him to return to his palace while the Spaniards were in his court. He was unwilling to quit the quarters, on account of the dangers the Spaniards would be in whenever he abandoned them; but it is also probable, that his own personal danger likewise prevented him from resuming his liberty, for he was not ignorant how much he had offended and disgusted his vassals, by his debasement of spirit and excess of submission to the Spaniards.

It is also probable, that the punishment of Quauhpopoca excited some ferment among the nobility; for, a few days after, Cacamatzin king of Acolhuacan, unable to brook the authority which the Spaniards were gaining in Mexico, and ashamed to see the miserable situation of his uncle Montezuma, sent to tell him,—that he should remember that he was a king, and not to make himself the slave of those strangers: but finding that Montezuma refused to attend to his counsel, resolved himself to make war upon the Spaniards. Their ruin would have been inevitable, if the esteem of Cacamatzin with the Mexican and Tezcucan subjects had been equal to his intrepidity and resolution; but the Mexicans suspected, that under sanction of zeal for the honour of his uncle he disguised some lurking ambition and design to usurp the crown of Mexico; among his own subjects

jects of Tezcuco he was not very popular, on account of his pride and the injury he had done his brother the prince Cuicuitzcatzin, who, to shun being persecuted, had taken shelter in Mexico, and was more acceptable to the people on account of his more affable disposition.

Cacamatzin therefore went to Tezcuco, and having called together his counsellors and the most respectable persons of his court, represented to them the deplorable state of Mexico, owing to the unequalled audacity of the Spaniards, and pusillanimity of the king his uncle; the authority which those strangers were acquiring, the outrages offered to the king by the imprisonment of his person as if he had been a slave, and the insult rendered to their gods by the introduction of the worship of a strange deity into that kingdom; he exaggerated the evils which might result from such beginnings to the court and kingdom of Acolhuacan: "It is time now," he said, "to fight for our religion, for our country, for our liberty, and for our honour, before the power of those men is increased by reinforcements from their own country or new alliances in this." At last he enjoined them all to speak their opinions freely. The majority of his counsellors declared for war, either in complaisance to their king or because they were all of the same opinion, but some aged respectable persons told the king plainly, that he should not suffer himself to be led away by the ardour of youth; that before any resolution was taken it ought to be remembered, that the Spaniards were warlike resolute men, and fought with arms superior to theirs; that he should not consider the relation between himself and Montezuma so much as the alliance of the latter with the Spaniards; that a friendship of that nature, of which there were the clearest and

and most certain proofs, would make him sacrifice all the interests of his family and his country to the ambition of those strangers.

In spite of those representations war was resolved upon, and immediately they began to make preparations for it with the utmost secrecy ; but still not sufficient to prevent the intelligence of it from reaching Montezuma and Cortes : this general became extremely uneasy at it, but reflecting that all his daring designs had succeeded, he resolved to ward off the blow, by marching with his troops to make an assault upon Tezcuco. Montezuma dissuaded him from so dangerous a step, informing him of the strength of that capital and the immense number of its inhabitants. Cortes determined, therefore, to send an embassy to that king, calling to his recollection the friendship formerly agreed upon between them in Ajotzinco when he came to meet him in the name of his uncle, and also to tell him to reflect that it was not easier to undertake war than difficult to succeed in it, and that it would turn out to better account for him to keep up a good correspondence with the king of Castile and the Spanish nation. Cacamatzin answered, that he could not regard men as friends who injured his honour, wronged his blood, disdained his religion, and oppressed his country ; that he did not know who the king of Castile was, nor was it of any importance for him to know it ; that if they would escape the storm which was now ready to pour upon them, they should immediately quit Mexico, and return to their native country.

Notwithstanding this firm answer, Cortes repeated his embassy ; but being again answered in the same tone, he complained to Montezuma ; and, in order to engage him in the affair, he feigned to suspect even him of having  
some



some influence in the hostile designs of his nephew. Montezuma cleared himself from suspicion by the most sincere protestations, and offered to interpose his authority. He sent to tell Cacamatzin to come to Mexico to visit him, and that he would find means to accommodate the difference. Cacamatzin, amazed at seeing Montezuma more interested in favour of those who destroyed his liberty, than of his own relation who was zealous to restore it to him, answered, that if after such infamous treatment he had a spark of honour left, he would be ashamed of seeing himself made the slave of four ruffians, who, while they cajoled with fair words, heaped acts of affront upon him ; that since neither zeal for the Mexican religion and the gods of the Acolhuans, whom those strangers had blasphemously insulted, nor the glory of his ancestors, obscured and debased by his own pusillanimity, could move him, he himself was disposed to aid his religion—to vindicate his gods—to preserve the kingdom, and recover the honour and liberty of him and every Mexican subject ; that he would indeed see him at Mexico, not however with his hands in his bosom, but wielding his sword, to wipe off and cancel with the blood of the Spaniards the disgrace which stained the nation.

Montezuma was extremely alarmed by this answer, fearing that, either from the revenge of the Spaniards or the fury of king Cacamatzin, he would become the victim of the approaching storm ; upon which account he resolved to adopt the last resource to prevent it, and save his own life by treachery. He therefore gave secret orders to some Mexican officers, who served in the guard of his nephew the king of Acolhuacan, to exert their utmost efforts, and without delay, to seize his person and conduct him with the greatest care to Mexico, because it

was

was of importance to the nation at large. He suggested to them the manner of doing it, and probably also made them some gift and promised them some reward to encourage them in the undertaking. They again solicited other officers and domestics of the king Cacamatzin, whom they knew to be disposed to such a faction, and by the assistance of the last they obtained all that Montezuma desired. Among other palaces of the king of Acolhuacan, there was one built upon the edge of the lake, in such a manner that by a canal, which ran under it, vessels could come out or go in to it. There, as Cacamatzin was then residing at this palace, they placed a number of vessels with armed men, and in the darkness of the night, which favours all conspiracies, they suddenly seized upon the king, and, before any persons could come to his assistance, put him into a vessel and conveyed him with the utmost expedition to Mexico. Montezuma, without paying any respect to the character of sovereign nor his relation with Cacamatzin, delivered him up immediately to Cortes. This general, by what appears from his conduct, had not the least idea of the respect which is due to majesty even in the person of a barbarian, put him in irons, and confined him under a strong guard. The reflections to be made on this, and other extraordinary events in this history, are too obvious to require any interruption of the course of our relation with them.

Cacamatzin, who began his unhappy reign with the dissension of his brother Ixtlchochitl and the dismemberment of the state, concluded it with the loss of his crown, his liberty, and his life. Montezuma determined, with the consent of Cortes, that the crown of Acolhuacan should be given to the prince Cuicuitzcatzin, who had  
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been entertained by Montezuma in his palace from the time that, in order to avoid the persecutions of his brother Cacamatzin, he had taken refuge in Mexico and put himself under his protection. This election did great wrong to the princes Coanacotzin and Ixtlilxochitl, who, by having been born of the queen Xocotzin, had a better right to the crown. The motive does not appear which made Montezuma refuse Coanacotzin, although with respect to Ixtlilxochitl it is certain that he was afraid of increasing the power of so troublesome an enemy. However it was, Montezuma made Cuicuitzcatzin be acknowledged king by the nobles of Tezcuco, and accompanied him, along with Cortes, to the vessel in which he was to cross the lake, and recommended to him the constant friendship of the Mexicans and the Spaniards, as he was indebted to them both for his crown.

Cuicuitzcatzin repaired to Tezcuco, accompanied by many nobles of each court, and was received there with acclamations, triumphal arches, and dances, the nobility transporting him in a litter from the vessel to the royal palace, where the eldest noble made him a long discourse in the name of the whole nation, congratulating him and exhorting him to love all his vassals, and promising to treat him as a father and to revere him as their sovereign. It is impossible to express the grief which this event occasioned to Cacamatzin, who found himself in the flower of youth, being still no more than twenty-five years of age, deprived of the crown which three years before he had inherited from his father, and reduced to the confinement and solitude of a prison by the very king whom he had purposed to make free, and those strangers whom he had designed to drive out of the kingdom.

Cortes



Cortes had now got into his power the two most potent kings of Anahuac, and it was not long before he took also the king of Tlacopan, the lords of Iztapalapan and Cojohuacan, both brothers of Montezuma, two sons of this same king, Itzquauhtzin lord of Tlatelolco, a high-priest of Mexico, and several more of the most respectable personages into custody, although we do not know the particulars of their imprisonment; but it is probable, that he proceeded to take them one after another, as they came to visit Montezuma.

The general, encouraged by his various successes, and seeing the king of Mexico totally devoted to his will, told him it was now time for his subjects to acknowledge the king of Spain their lawful sovereign, who was descended from the king and god Quetzalcoatl. Montezuma, who had not courage to contradict him, assembled the principal nobility of the court and the neighbouring cities; they came all readily to receive his orders, and being met in a large hall of the Spanish quarters, the king made them a long discourse, in which he declared the affection he bore them as a father, from whom consequently they ought not to fear that he would propose any thing to them which was not just and advantageous: he called to their memory the ancient tradition concerning the devolution of the Mexican empire on the descendants of Quetzalcoatl, whose viceroys he and his ancestors had been, and the phenomena observed in the elements, which, according to the interpretation of the priests and divines, signified that the time was now arrived when the oracles were to be fulfilled: he then proceeded to compare the marks observed in the Spaniards with those of the tradition, from whence he concluded that the king of Spain was evidently the lawful descendant

descendant of Quetzalcoatl, to whom therefore he yielded up the kingdom and owned obedience, and exhorted them all to do the same (s). In pronouncing himself the subject of another king he felt his spirit so wounded, that his voice failed him and tears were substituted for words. The sorrows of the king were succeeded by such bitter sobs from the whole assembly, that they affected and drew the pity of the Spaniards. To these emotions a melancholy silence succeeded, which was at length broken by one of the most respectable Mexican chiefs, with these words: "Since the time, O prince, "is arrived when those ancient oracles are to be fulfilled, "and the gods incline and you command that we become the subjects of another lord, what else have we "to do but to submit to the sovereign will of heaven intimated to us from your mouth."

Cortes then thanked the king and all the lords who were present for their ready and sincere submission, and declared that his sovereign did not presume to take the

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(s) The circumstances of the above mentioned assembly, of the homage rendered to the king of Spain, and of the order intimated from Montezuma to Cortes to depart from the court, is related by historians with such variety, that no two of them are found to agree. In the narration of these events we chiefly follow the accounts of Cortes and Bernal Diaz, who were both eye witnesses. Solis affirms, that the acknowledgment made by Montezuma was a mean artifice, *that he never had any intention to fulfil what he promised, that his aim was to hasten the departure of the Spaniards, and to temporize for the secret purposes of his ambition, without any regard for his words or engagement*; but if the act of Montezuma was a mere artifice, and he did not mean to effect what he promised, why in owning himself the vassal of another monarch did he feel so much anguish, that it cut his voice short and drew tears from his eyes, as this author himself says. If he only meant to hasten the departure of the Spaniards, there was no occasion for such a feint. How often, with a single beck to his vassals, could he have sacrificed the Spaniards to his gods, or sparing their lives, have made them be bound and conducted to the port, that thence they might resume their course to Cuba? The whole of Montezuma's conduct was entirely inconsistent with the intentions which Solis ascribes to him.

crown from the king of Mexico, but only to make his supreme dominion over that kingdom be acknowledged, that Montezuma would not only continue to govern his subjects, but would also exercise the same authority over all those people who should submit themselves to the Spaniards. Having dismissed the assembly, Cortes ordered a public memorial of that act to be made with all the solemnity which he thought necessary, in order to send it to the court of Spain.

Having thus happily accomplished his purpose, he represented to Montezuma, that since he had acknowledged the dominion of the king of Castile over those countries, it was necessary to manifest his submission by the contribution of some gold and silver, in consequence of the right which sovereigns had to exact such homage from their vassals, in order to support the splendor of the crown, to maintain their ministers, the expenses of war, and the other necessities of the state. Montezuma, with truly royal munificence, gave him up the treasure of his father Axajacatl, which was preserved, as we have already said, in the same palace, from which nothing had been taken by Cortes hitherto, although it had been expressly permitted him by the king to take whatever he pleased. The whole of this treasure fell into the hands of the Spaniards, together with all that had been contributed by the feudatory lords of that crown, which amounted to so much, that, after deducting a fifth part for the king of Spain, Cortes had as much as was necessary to pay all his debts, contracted in Cuba in raising his corps and equipping the armament, and to reward his officers and soldiers, leaving still behind enough for future expenses. For the king they appropriated, besides a fifth part of the gold and silver, some particular  
pieces



pieces of work preserved entire on account of their wonderful workmanship, which, according to the valuation made of them by Cortes, were worth more than one hundred thousand ducats : but the greater part of this wealth was lost, as we shall find hereafter.

The Spaniards exulted to see themselves the masters of so much wealth at so small a cost ; and a kingdom so great and opulent, subjected to their sovereign with so little trouble ; but their prosperity was now at its height, and, according to the condition of human affairs, it was necessary that their successes should be chequered with adversities. The Mexican nobility, who had hitherto preserved a respectful silence in deference to the will of their sovereign, seeing him thus fallen and degraded, the king of Acolhuacan and other persons of rank put in chains, and the nation subjected to the dominion of a strange monarch whom they knew not, began first to whisper, then to speak out with more freedom, to blame their own patience, to hold assemblies, and at last, as is reported, to levy troops to free their king and their nation from such ignominious oppression. Montezuma was spoken to by some of his favourites, who represented to him the pain his misfortunes and disgrace gave his vassals, who considered his power to be almost expiring and the splendour of his dignity obscured, and the ferment which began to rise not only among the nobles but also among the common people, who were grown impatient of seeing themselves subjected and condemned to sacrifice to a strange king the harvest of their labours : they exhorted him to dispel the fears which had taken possession of him, and to resume his wonted authority ; since, if he would not do it, his vassals would, as they were determined to drive those insolent and destructive guests from  
the

the kingdom. On the other hand, the priests exaggerated the injuries which religion suffered, and intimidated him with the threats which, they said, the gods in anger had made, to deny the necessary rain to the fields, and their protection to the Mexicans, if he did not dismiss those men who were so disdainful of their worship.

Montezuma moved by those representations of his favourites, and menaces of his gods, ashamed of being reproached for his cowardice, and affected by the disgrace of his nephew Cacamatzin, whom he had always loved with particular tenderness, and the dishonour which had befallen his brother Cuitlahuatzin, and other persons of the first nobility, although he did not consent to the design of taking away the lives of the Spaniards, to which some advised him, resolved, however, to tell them openly, that they must depart from that kingdom. He one day, therefore, sent for Cortes, who being apprised of the secret conferences which the king had had with his ministers, his nobles, and priests, felt many apprehensions; but dissembling his uneasiness of mind, he repaired immediately to the king accompanied by twelve Spaniards. Montezuma received him with less cordiality than usual, and freely laid open his resolution. "You cannot," he said, "doubt of the great attachment I bear you, after so many and clear demonstrations of it. Hitherto I have willingly entertained you in my court, have even been so desirous of the pleasure of your company and conversation, as to remain here and live amongst you. As for my own part, I would retain you here without any charge, daily making you experience some fresh proofs of my good will towards you; but it cannot be done; neither will my gods permit it, nor will my subjects endure it. I find

“ find I am threatened with the heaviest punishments of  
“ heaven if I let you remain any longer in my kingdom ;  
“ and such discontent already prevails among my vassals,  
“ that unless I quickly remove the cause, it will be alto-  
“ gether impossible to pacify them. Wherefore it is  
“ become necessary for my own, as well as yours, and  
“ the good of all the kingdom, that you prepare your-  
“ selves to return to your native country.” Cortes, al-  
though extremely mortified and distressed, dissembled yet  
his feelings, and assuming great serenity of countenance,  
answered, that he was extremely ready to obey him ;  
but as they wanted vessels to transport them, on account  
of those which they had come in from Cuba having be-  
come useless, they required time, workmen, and materi-  
als, to make others. Montezuma, full of joy at the rea-  
diness with which he was obeyed, embraced him, and  
told him, that it was not necessary to precipitate his de-  
parture ; that he might build his vessels ; that he would  
supply him with the necessary timber, and people to cut  
it, and transport it to the harbour. Immediately he gave  
orders to a number of carpenters to cut the necessary  
timber from a grove of pines, which was at a small dis-  
tance from the port of Chiahuitztlan, and Cortes, on  
his part, sent some Spaniards there to superintend the  
woodcutters, expecting, in the mean time, that some-  
thing would change the state of affairs in Mexico, or  
that some new reinforcement of Spaniards would be sent  
to him from the islands or from Spain (*t*).

## Eight

(*t*) Almost all the Spanish historians say, that when the king made Cortes  
be called to intimate to him the order to depart, he had levied an army to make  
him be obeyed by force if necessary ; but there is a great difference of opinion  
among them, as some affirm that there were an hundred thousand men in arms ;  
others say, only half that number ; and others lastly say only five thousand. We  
are persuaded that some troops were in readiness, but not by the order of the  
king, but of some of the nobles, who had taken a more active part in this mat-  
ter.



Eight days after this resolution had been taken, Montezuma sent for Cortes a second time, and this general was again rendered uneasy. The king told him, that it was no longer necessary to build vessels, for that a short time ago eighteen vessels, similar to those which had been destroyed, had arrived at the port of Chalchiuhcuecan, in which he might embark with all his troops; that he should therefore hasten his departure, as it was of importance to the welfare of the kingdom. Cortes dissembled the joy which he received from such intelligence, and offering secret thanks to heaven for having sent him such timely assistance; he answered the king, that if that fleet was making its voyage towards Cuba, he was ready to depart, but that otherwise it would be requisite to continue the building of his vessels. He saw and examined the paintings which had been sent to the king of this new armament by the governors upon the coast, and he did not doubt that it was Spanish; but very far from imagining that it was sent against him, he persuaded himself that it was his commissioners whom he had sent home the year before to the court of Spain, who were returned, and brought with them the royal despatches, and a large number of troops for the conquest.

This pleasing consolation lasted until the letters of Gonzalez de Sandoval, governor of the colony of Vera Cruz arrived, which acquainted him that that armament, consisting of eleven ships, and seven brigantines, of eighty-five horses, eight hundred infantry, and upwards of five hundred seamen, with twelve pieces of artillery, and plenty of warlike ammunition under the command of Panfilo Narvaez, was sent by Diego Velasquez, governor of Cuba, against Cortes himself, as a rebel, vassal, and traitor to his sovereign. He received this unexpected

pected blow in the presence of the king Montezuma, but, without shewing the smallest marks of emotion in his countenance, he gave the king to understand, that those who had arrived at the port of Chalchiuhcuecan were new companions sent him from Cuba. He made use of the same dissimulation to his own Spaniards, until their minds were prepared for the truth.

It is beyond a doubt, that this was one of those singular occasions on which Cortes displayed his unshaken fortitude and magnanimity. He found himself on the one hand threatened by all the power of the Mexicans if he remained at the court ; and on the other, he saw an army levied against himself, composed of his own countrymen, far superior to his own force ; but his sagacity, his unremitting activity and industry, and wonderful courage, diverted all the evils which hung over him. He endeavoured, by means of letters, and some mediators in whom he chiefly trusted, to gain the mind of Narvaez, and to bring him to reflection ; proposing various measures to him, and representing to him the advantages which the Spaniards would derive from the union of their armies and the co-operation of their forces ; and on the contrary, the disasters which might be occasioned by discord to them both : Narvaez, by the advice of three deserters from Cortes, had already disembarked with all his fleet upon the coast of Chempoalla, and put himself in quarters in that city ; the lord of which, knowing them to be Spaniards, and believing that they came to unite with Cortes his friend, or fearful of their power, received them with the greatest honour, and provided them every thing they wanted. Montezuma also believing the same thing in the beginning, sent rich presents to Narvaez, and gave orders to his governors to offer

offer him the same civilities which they had already shewn to Cortes ; but in a few days after, in spite of the great dissimulation of Cortes, and although he used every effort to hinder such intelligence from reaching the king or his vassals, the want of harmony between them was discerned.

Montezuma had now the fairest opportunity to destroy them both, if he had harboured in his breast those bloody designs which several historians have imputed to him. Narvaez endeavoured to alienate him from Cortes, and those of his party, accusing them all of treason, and promising to punish their unheard of audacity in imprisoning so great a king, and to free not only the king himself, but the whole nation from their oppression ; but Montezuma was so far from plotting any thing against Cortes from these suggestions, that, on the contrary, when this general made him acquainted with the expedition he intended against Narvaez, Montezuma expressed great uneasiness at the danger to which he exposed himself with troops so inferior in number, and offered to raise immediately a great army to his assistance.

Cortes had now used every possible means to bring about a peaceable accommodation, which would unquestionably have been advantageous for both armies, but without any other effect than that of producing fresh menaces and disdain from the fierce and arrogant Narvaez. Finding himself therefore compelled to make war upon his countrymen, and not willing, on account of his diffidence and distrust of the Mexicans to avail himself of the assistance which Montezuma offered, he requested the senate of Tlascala to raise four thousand warriors to go along with him, and sent one of his soldiers, named Tobilla, a man well skilled in the art of war,



war, to Chinantla, to demand two thousand men from that warlike nation ; and also to procure three hundred pikes of the kind made use of by these Indians for the purpose of resisting the cavalry of Narvaez, as they were both longer and stronger than those of the Spaniards. He left in Mexico one hundred and forty soldiers (*u*), with all their allies, under the command of Pedro d'Alvarado, recommending it to them to guard and treat the king well, and to maintain harmony between them and the Mexicans, particularly the royal family and the nobility. Upon taking leave of the king, he told him, that he left in his place the captain *Tonatiuh* (as Alvarado was called by this name of the sun among the Mexicans, because he was fair), who was charged to serve his majesty in every thing ; that he requested him to continue his protection to the Spaniards ; that he was going to find that captain who was lately arrived, and to do every thing possible for putting his royal commands into execution. Montezuma, after having made new protestations to him of his good-will and attachment, furnished him plentifully with provisions and men of burden to transport his baggage, and took leave of him with the utmost friendship.

Cortes set out from Mexico in the beginning of May, in the year 1520, after having been six months in that capital, with seventy Spaniards, and some Mexican nobles, who chose to accompany him a part of the way. Several historians are persuaded that the Mexicans went

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(*u*) Bernal Diaz says, that the Spaniards left behind in Mexico were eighty-three in number. In the modern editions of Cortes's letters, they are said to have been five hundred : but the ancient editions say one hundred and forty, which appears to have been the truth, considering the total amount of the Spanish troops. The number of five hundred is evidently false, and contradicts Cortes in his own account.

to become spies, and to give the king an account of every thing which happened; but Cortes did not consider them as such, although neither did he place much confidence in them. He made his journey through Cholula, where he was joined by the captain Velasquez, who was returned from Coatzacualco, having been sent there by Cortes to search for a more commodious harbour for the ships. There Cortes also received a considerable supply of provisions, which were sent him by the senate of Tlascala; but he had not the four thousand men he demanded; either because they durst not enter into new wars against the Spaniards, as Bernal Diaz affirms, or because they were unwilling to remove themselves so far from their native country, as is reported by other historians; or from seeing Cortes with forces so inferior in number to those of his enemy, they dreaded another defeat in the expedition. Some days before he arrived at Chempoalla, Cortes was joined by the soldier Tobilla, with three hundred pikes from Chinantla, and in Tapanacuetla, a village about thirty miles distant from that city, he was joined by the famous captain Sandoval with sixty soldiers from the garrison of Vera Cruz.

At length after having made new proposals to Narvaez, and having distributed some gold among the partizans of this arrogant general, Cortes entered into Chempoalla at midnight with two hundred and fifty (\*) men, without horses, or any other arms than pikes, swords, shields, and daggers, and marching without the smallest noise or rumour to the greater temple of that city,

(\*) Bernal Diaz says, that Cortes went to Chempoalla with two hundred and six men; Torquemada makes two hundred and sixty-six, besides five captains; but Cortes, who knew better than them, affirms, they were two hundred and fifty.

city, where his enemy was quartered, he made so furious an assault, that, before break of day, he rendered himself master of the temple, of all his enemies, the artillery, arms, and horses, only four of his soldiers being killed, and fifteen of the enemy, though many on both sides were wounded (y). He made himself be acknowledged captain-general and supreme magistrate by them all, put Narvaez and Salvatierra, a respectable officer, and sworn enemy of Cortes, both in irons in the fort of Vera Cruz, and made the sails, rudders, and compasses of the ships be brought on shore. The light of the morning of that day, which was Whitsuntide, the 27th of May, had hardly appeared, when the two thousand troops from Chinantla arrived in good order, and well armed (z), but they came only to be witnesses of the triumph of Cortes, and the shame of the party under Narvaez, to see themselves conquered by so few enemies, who were less armed than they. The success of this attack was in a great measure owing to the unparalleled bravery of Sandoval, who, with eighty men, mounted into the temple in the midst of a storm of arrows and balls, attacked the sanctuary where Narvaez was fortified, and seized his person.

Cortes now finding himself master of eighteen vessels, and almost two thousand men of Spanish troops, with nearly a hundred horses, and great sufficiency of ammunition, thought of making new expeditions on the coast of the Mexican gulf, and had already appointed the commanders

(y) Authors are not agreed as to the number killed in that assault, we put the number which appears the most probable, according to the account of the different authors.

(z) Some authors say, that the *Chinantlans* were present at the assault made on the quarters of Narvaez; but Bernal Diaz, who was present, affirms the contrary. Cortes does not make mention of them.



commanders who were to head them, and the people who were to be under their orders, when unlucky news arrived from Mexico, which obliged him to repair in haste to that capital.

During the time Cortes was absent from Mexico, the festival of the incensing of Huitzilopochtli happened, which was held in the month *Toxcatl*, which that year began on the 13th of May. This festival, the most solemn of all which yearly occurred, was usually celebrated with dances by the king, the nobles, the priests, and the people. The nobility requested captain Alvarado to consent that the king might go to the temple on this occasion to perform his devotion. Alvarado excused himself from granting the request, on account of the orders given him by Cortes, or because he suspected the Mexicans would meditate some revolution when they had the king with them, well knowing how easily public rejoicings are changed into tumults and disorder. They adopted the design, therefore, of making that religious dance in the court of the palace (*a*), or quarters of the Spaniards, either by the direction of that captain, or by the order of the king himself, that he might be present according to custom. When the day of the festival arrived, many men of the first nobility assembled  
in

(*a*) The historians of the conquest say in general, that the dance was made in the lower area of the greater temple, but it is not probable, that the immense crowd of people which must have assembled there, would have permitted so horrid a slaughter to have been made of the nobility, especially, as the armories were there, from whence they could have taken out as many arms as they required to oppose the attempt of those few strangers; nor is it credible, that the Spaniards would run such an evident risk of their own destruction. Cortes and Bernal Diaz make no mention of the place of the dance. Acosta says, that it was made in the palace, nor could it have been in any other than that which the king was then inhabiting.

in the court, (the number (*b*) of whom is not known), adorned with various ornaments of gold, gems, and feathers. They began to dance and to sing to the sound of musical instruments; and in the mean while, Alvarado stationed some foldiers at the gate. When he saw the Mexicans become heated, and possibly also weary with dancing, he gave a signal to his men to attack them; they immediately charged with the utmost fury upon those unfortunate victims, who were unable to make any resistance, as they were unarmed and fatigued, nor was it possible for them to escape by flight, as the gates were guarded. The slaughter was terrible, and the cries piteous which the dying uttered, and the copious blood which was shed. This fatal blow was most sensibly felt by the Mexicans, for they lost by it the flower of their nobility; and, to perpetuate the memory of it among their descendants, they composed dirges and elegies on the subject, which they preserved for many years after the conquest. When the horrid tragedy was ended, the Spaniards stripped the dead bodies of all the riches with which they were adorned.

The motive is not known which induced Alvarado to commit an action so abominably inhuman. Some have said he was influenced alone by his insatiable thirst for gold (*c*). Others affirm, and which is more probable, that

(*b*) By Gomara, the nobles who were present at the dance are reckoned six hundred, by other historians more than a thousand, and by Las Casas more than two thousand.

(*c*) The Mexican historians, Sahagun, in his history, Las Casas, in his formidable account of the destruction of the Indies, and Gomara, in his Chronicle, affirm, that the avarice of Alvarado was the cause of the slaughter committed on the Mexican nobility; but we cannot believe it without stronger proofs. Gomara and Las Casas have unquestionably followed Sahagun in this opinion, and he must have received it from the Mexicans, who, being enemies of the Spaniards, are not to be trusted in this matter.

that it having been whispered that the Mexicans designed at this festival to strike a decisive stroke on the Spaniards, to deliver themselves from oppression, and set their lord and king again at liberty, whom the Spaniards had imprisoned, he prevented them, thinking, according to the vulgar adage, he who attacks, conquers. However the case was, his conduct cannot be defended neither from the charge of imprudence nor cruelty (*d*).

The common people were irritated by a blow which touched them so deeply, and treated the Spaniards ever after as the mortal enemies of their country. Some Mexican troops assaulted their quarters with such impetuosity, that they broke down a part of the wall, undermined the palace in different places, and burned their ammunition, but they were repelled by the fire of the artillery and musketry, by which the Spaniards had an opportunity of repairing the wall. That night the Spaniards reposed purely from the fatigues of the day, but the day after the assault was so furious, that they thought they must have perished, and certainly not one of them would have remained alive, five or six of them being already killed, had not the king shewn himself to the crowd of assaulters, and by his authority restrained their fury. Respect  
to

(*d*) It is altogether incredible that the Mexicans should upon occasion of the dance, have plotted against the Spaniards, that treason which some historians have supposed, and still more that they had actually prepared the vessels in which they were to boil the flesh of the Spaniards, as Torquemada says. These are fables invented to justify Alvarado. What appears the most probable solution of this event is, that the Tlascalans out of the great hatred which they bore to the Mexicans, inspired Alvarado with suspicions of this pretended treachery. The history of the conquest furnishes us with many examples of such kind of artful designing conduct in the Tlascalans.



to the presence of their sovereign checked the multitude from continuing the attack upon the Spanish quarters; but it did not make them desist from other hostilities; they burned the four brigantines which Cortes had ordered to be built, in order to save himself in them provided he could not at any time make his escape by the roads made upon the lake, and resolved to destroy the Spaniards by famine, denying them provisions, and contriving to hinder the introduction of any to them, by drawing a ditch all round their quarters.

In this situation the Spaniards found themselves in Mexico, when Alvarado sent advice to Cortes, requesting him by two different messages, carried by the Tlascalans, to hasten his return, unless he chose to let them all perish. The same thing was desired by Montezuma, who acquainted him how distressed he was at the insurrection of his vassals, which, however, had been occasioned by the rash and bloody attempt of the captain Tonatiuh.

Cortes after having given orders to transplant the colony of Vera Cruz to a more convenient situation, near the port of Chalchiuhcuecan (although this was not then executed), marched with his people by long journeys towards the capital. In Tlascala, he was magnificently lodged in the palace of the prince Maxixcatzin. There he made a review of his troops, and found them consist of ninety-six horses, and thirteen hundred Spanish infantry, to which two thousand Tlascalans were added to the republic. With this army he marched into Mexico on the 24th of June. He met with no opposition to his entry, but very soon he was sensible of a ferment among the people, not only from seeing few or none of them in the streets, but also by their having raised some bridges from

from the canals. When he entered into the quarters with the rejoicing which is easy to be imagined on both sides, Montezuma came to meet him in the court with the most obsequious demonstrations of friendship; but Cortes, either grown insolent from the victory obtained over Narvaez, the number of people under his command, or being persuaded that it was necessary to affect to believe the king blameable for the disturbance made by his vassals, passed along without paying any attention towards him. The king, pierced to the heart at seeing himself so disdainfully treated, retired to his apartment, where his affliction was still increased by the information brought by his servants that the Spanish general had expressed himself in words most injurious to his majesty (e).

Cortes reprimanded the captain Alvarado with great severity, and would certainly have inflicted upon him the punishment he deserved, if the circumstances of the time and the person had permitted. He foresaw the great storm which was now to pour upon them, and he thought it would have been imprudent to have created himself an enemy, upon an occasion of so much danger, of one of the bravest captains he had in his army.

With

(e) The historian Solis is not disposed to believe that this mark of contempt was shewn by Cortes to Montezuma; and in order to vindicate that general, he wrongs B. Diaz, who affirms it as having been an eye-witness; and Herrera, who relates it on the support of good documents. He undeservedly accuses B. Diaz of partiality against Cortes; and of Herrera he says, that it is to be suspected that he chose to adopt the account of B. Diaz, for the purpose of making use of a sentence of Tacitus; *ambition*, he adds, *dangerous to historians*, but to none more than Solis himself; for every impartial and well-informed person in the history of Mexico will perceive, in reading the works of Solis, that this author, instead of adjusting the sentences to the relation, on the contrary, adjusts the relation to the sentences. Lastly, as he adduces no better reasons than those offered by B. Diaz, we ought to give more credit to the latter as an eye-witness of the fact.

With the new troops which Cortes brought to Mexico, he had an army of nine thousand men, but there not being accommodation for them all in the quarters, they occupied some of those buildings which were within the enclosure of the greater temple, and the nearest to the quarters. From their multitude also the scarcity of provisions, already occasioned by the want of a market, was augmented, for the Mexicans, in hatred to the Spaniards, would no longer hold any. Cortes therefore sent to tell Montezuma, with strong threats, that he should give orders for a market to be held, that they might provide themselves with every thing necessary. Montezuma answered, that the persons of the greatest authority to whom he could trust the execution of such an order, were all, as he was, in prison; that some of them must be set at liberty, that his wish might be accomplished. Cortes let the prince Cuitlahuatzin, the brother of Montezuma, out of confinement, not foreseeing that the liberty of that prince would be the cause of ruin to the Spaniards. Cuitlahuatzin never returned to the quarters, nor re-established the market, either because he would not favour the Spaniards, or because the Mexicans would not consent to it, but compelled him to exercise his post of general. In fact, it was he who from that time commanded the troops, and directed all the hostilities against the Spaniards, until at last, by the death of his brother, he was elected king of Mexico.

On the day on which Cortes entered into Mexico, there was no movement made by the people; but the day after they began to sling and shoot so many stones at the Spaniards, that they appeared, as Cortes says, like a tempest: and so many arrows, that they covered the pavement of the court and the terraces of the palace.



lace; and the number of the assailters was so great, that they covered all the ground of the streets. Cortes did not think it proper to stand wholly upon his defence, lest that should be ascribed to cowardice, and inspire the enemy with more courage. He made a sally out upon them with four hundred men, part Spaniards and part Tlascalans. The Mexicans retired with little loss, and Cortes, after having made fire be set to some of the houses, returned to his quarters; but finding that the enemy continued their hostilities, he made the captain Ordaz go out with two hundred soldiers against them. The Mexicans affected to be put into confusion, and to fly, in order to draw the enemy to a distance from their quarters, in which they succeeded; for suddenly the Spaniards found themselves surrounded by the Mexicans on all sides, and attacked by a body of troops in front and another behind, but in such a tumultuous manner, that their disorder impeded their action. At the same time appeared a numerous rabble on the tops of the houses, who kept up a constant shower of arrows and stones. The Spaniards found themselves now in imminent danger, and this occasion was certainly one of those on which the brave Ordaz displayed his skill and courage. The contest was most bloody, but with no great loss to the Spaniards, who, with their guns and cross-bows cleared the terraces, and with their pikes and swords repelled the multitude which deluged the streets, and at last were able to retire to their quarters, leaving many Mexicans, though not more than eight of their own people, killed; but they were almost all wounded, and even Ordaz himself. Amongst the distresses suffered by the Spaniards from the Mexicans that day, the setting fire to different parts of the quarters was one, and the fire was so violent

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in some places, that the Spaniards were obliged to throw down the wall, and defend the breach with the artillery, and a number of soldiers whom they stationed there, till night, when the enemy gave them opportunity to rebuild the wall and take care of the wounded.

The following day, the 26th of June, the assault was more terrible, and the fury of the Mexicans still greater. The Spaniards defended themselves with twelve pieces of artillery, which committed uncommon havock upon their enemy; but as the number of them was infinite, they covered the sight of the dead with fresh substitutes in their place. Cortes perceiving their obstinacy, sallied out with the greater part of his troops, and proceeded fighting his way through one of the principal streets of the city, took possession of some of the bridges, set fire to some houses, and after continuing in action almost the whole day, he returned to the quarters with more than fifty Spaniards wounded, leaving innumerable Mexicans dead in the streets.

Experience had made Cortes sensible, that the greatest annoyance his troops met with was from the terraces of the houses; to shun which in future he ordered three machines of war to be constructed, called by the Spaniards *Mantas*, so large that each of them would carry twenty armed soldiers, covered with a strong roof to defend them from the stones thrown from the terraces, furnished with wheels also to make them easy to move, and little windows or port-holes for the discharge of their guns.

While those machines were constructing, great changes took place at court. Montezuma, having ascended one of the towers of the palace, observed from it one of the above mentioned engagements, and amongst the multitude

tude his brother Cuitlahuatzin, commanding the Mexican troops. At the sight of so many objects of misfortune, his mind was seized with a crowd of melancholy thoughts. On the one hand, he saw the danger he was in of losing both his crown and his life; and on the other, the destruction of the buildings of his capital, the slaughter of his vassals, and the success of his enemies; and found there was no other remedy to all those evils but the immediate departure of the Spaniards. In these meditations he passed the night, and the day following he sent early for Cortes, and spoke to him on the subject, praying him earnestly not to defer any longer his removal from that City. Cortes required no such entreaty to resolve upon his retreat from it. He found provisions were scanty in extreme; food was given to the soldiers by measure, and that so little, it was sufficient only to support life, not the strength necessary to oppose such enemies as incessantly harassed them. In short he saw it was impossible to render himself master of that city as he intended, nor could he even subsist there. But on the other hand, he felt no small regret to abandon the undertaking he had begun, losing in one moment, by his departure, all the advantages which his courage, his industry, and his good fortune had gained him; but submitting to the circumstances of his situation, he answered the king, that he was ready to depart for the peace of the kingdom, provided his subjects would lay down their arms.

This conference was hardly ended, when "To arms" was cried through the quarters, on account of a general assault of the Mexicans. On every side they attempted to mount the walls, on purpose to enter, while some troops of archers, conveniently posted, shot an immense  
multitude



multitude of arrows, to check the opposition made by the besieged, while some of the besiegers pushed so strenuously forward, that, in spite of the artillery and muskets, they got within the quarters, and began to fight man to man with the Spaniards, who, thinking themselves now almost vanquished and overpowered by the multitude, fought with desperation. Montezuma, observing this moment of the conflict, and his own immediate danger, resolved to let himself be seen, in order to restrain by his presence and his voice the fury of his subjects. Having for this purpose put on the royal ensigns, and attended by some of his ministers and two hundred Spaniards, he mounted on a terrace and shewed himself to the people, his ministers making a signal for silence, that they might hear the voice of their sovereign. At the sight of the king the assault ceased, all were mute, and some in reverence kneeled down. He spoke in an audible voice, and addressed them to the following effect: "If the motive which induces you to  
" take arms against those strangers is your zeal for my  
" liberty, I thank you for the love and fidelity you shew  
" me; but you deceive yourselves in thinking me a prisoner, for it is in my own option to leave this palace  
" of my late father, and return to my own, whenever  
" I choose it. If your resentment is caused by their stay  
" in this court, I acquaint you that they have given me  
" assurance, and I assure you, that they will depart as  
" soon as you will lay down your arms. Quiet therefore  
" your emotions; let your fidelity to me appear in this,  
" unless what I have heard is true, that you have sworn  
" to another that obedience which you owe to me;  
" which I cannot believe, nor can you ever do, without  
" drawing the vengeance of heaven down upon you."

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The people remained silent for some time, until a Mexican (*f*), more daring than the rest, raised his voice, calling the king cowardly and effeminate, and fitter to manage a spindle and a shuttle than to govern a nation so courageous; and reproaching him for having, from his cowardice and baseness, suffered himself to be made the prisoner of his enemies: and not content with reviling him with words, taking a bow in his hand, he shot an arrow at him. The common people, who are always apt to be moved by the first impulse which is given them, quickly followed his example; reproaches and contumelious language were heard on every side; and showers of stones and arrows poured towards the quarter where the king stood. The Spanish historians say, that although the person of the king was covered with two shields, he was wounded by a blow from a stone on the head, by another in the leg, and by an arrow in the arm. He was immediately carried by his servants to his chamber, more wounded in soul by anger and vexation, than hurt by the sacrilegious weapons of his subjects.

In the mean while, the Mexicans persisted in their attacks, and the Spaniards in their defence, until some nobles called Cortes to that same place where the king had received his wounds, in order to treat with him about certain articles, of which we do not find any historian give a proper and clear account. Cortes demanded of them why they were inclined to treat him as an enemy, having done them no wrong? "If you would avoid farther hostilities (said they), depart immediately from this city; if not, we are resolved to die, or to kill you all." Cortes replied, that he did not complain

(*f*) Acosta says, that the Mexican who spoke these insults to the king was Quauhtemotzin, his nephew, and the last king of Mexico.

plain to them because he was afraid of their arms, but because he was pained to be obliged to kill so many of them, and destroy so beautiful a city. The nobles went away, repeating their menaces.

The three warlike machines being at length finished, Cortes went out with them early on the 28th of June, and proceeded through one of the principal streets of the city with three thousand Tlascalans and other auxiliary troops, with the greater part of the Spaniards, and ten pieces of artillery. When they came to the bridge over the first canal, they drew the machines and scaling-ladders near to the houses, in order to drive the crowds from the terraces; but the stones were so many and so large which were thrown at the machines, that they broke through them. The Spaniards fought courageously until mid-day, without being able to take possession of the bridge; on which account they returned in shame to their quarters, leaving one man killed, and carrying back many wounded.

The Mexicans having been greatly encouraged by this last event, five hundred nobles fortified themselves in the upper area of the greater temple, well furnished with arms and provisions, and from thence began to do great damage to the Spaniards with stones and arrows, while other Mexican troops attacked them by the streets. Cortes sent a captain with a hundred soldiers to drive the nobles from that station, which being so very high and neighbouring, entirely commanded the quarters; but having made three different attempts to ascend there, they were vigorously repulsed. The general then determined to make the assault upon the temple himself, although he still suffered from a severe wound he had received in his left hand ever since the first engagement.

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He tied his shield to his arm, and having caused the temple to be surrounded by a sufficient number of Spaniards and Tlascalans, began to ascend the stairs of it with a great part of his people. The nobles who were now besieged disputed their ascent with great courage, and overturned some of the Spaniards; in the mean while, other Mexican troops having entered the lower area, fought furiously with those who surrounded the temple. Cortes, though not without the utmost fatigue and difficulty, at last gained the upper area along with his party. Now came on the greatest heat and danger of the contest, which lasted upwards of three hours. Part of the Mexicans died by the point of the sword, and part threw themselves down to the lower floors of the temple, where they continued the fight until they were all killed. Cortes ordered the sanctuary to be set on fire, and returned in good order to the quarters. Forty-six Spaniards lost their lives in this action, and all the rest came off wounded and bathed in blood. This spirited assault was one of those in which the opponents fought with the greatest courage on both sides, and on that account the Tlascalans as well as the Mexicans represented it in their paintings after the conquest (g).

Some historians have added the circumstance of the great danger in which, according to their account, Cortes was of being precipitated from the upper area by two Mexicans, who being resolved to sacrifice their lives for the good of their country, seized Cortes in their arms upon the edge of it in order to drag him along with

(g) The differences of opinion among historians respecting the order and circumstances of the engagements which happened in those days, is inexpressible. We follow the account given by Cortes, considering him the best authority.

with themselves in their fall from thence, trusting to put an end to the war by the death of that general; but this fact, of which neither Cortes, nor Bernal Diaz, nor Gomara, nor any other of the more ancient historians make mention, is rendered still more improbable by the circumstances added to it by some modern authors (*b*).

Cortes having returned to the quarters, had a fresh conference with some respectable persons among the Mexicans, representing to them the losses they sustained from the Spanish arms. They answered, that it was of no importance to them provided the Spaniards were destroyed; that if they were not all cut off by the Mexicans, they would infallibly perish by famine shut up in their quarters. Cortes having observed that night some inattention and want of vigilance among the citizens, sallied out with some companies of soldiers, and proceeding through one of the principal streets of the city, he set fire to more than three hundred houses (*i*).

The next day his machines being repaired, he went out with them and the greatest part of his troops, and directed his course along the great road of Iztapalapan with more success than before; for in spite of a vigo-

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(*b*) Solis says, that the two Mexicans approached *on their knees to Cortes, in the act of imploring his mercy, and without delay threw themselves downwards with their prey in their hands, increasing the violence of the effort with their natural weight; that Cortes got clear of them and repulsed them, though not without difficulty.* We find it rather difficult to believe Cortes possessed of such surprising force: the very humane gentlemen Raynal and Robertson, moved with compassion, it would appear, for the danger Cortes was in, have provided some kind of unknown battlements and iron rails, by which he saved himself until he got clear of the Mexicans; but neither did the Mexicans ever make iron rails, nor had that temple any battlements. It is wonderful that these authors, so incredulous concerning what is attested by the Spanish and Indian writers, should yet believe what is neither to be found among the ancient authors nor probable in itself.

(*i*) Bernal Diaz says, that it was a great fatigue to make them burn, from their being covered with terraces and separated from each other.

rous resistance from the enemies in their intrenchments made to defend them from the fire of the Spaniards, he took possession of the four first bridges, and set fire to some of the houses upon that road, and made use of the ruins to fill up the ditches and canals, that there might be no difficulty of passage if the Mexicans should raise the bridges. He left a sufficient garrison upon the posts which he had taken, and returned to quarters with many wounded, leaving ten or twelve dead behind him.

The day after he continued his attacks upon the same road, took the three bridges which remained, and charging the enemy which defended them, he at last got upon the main land. Whilst he was attending to fill up the last ditches, to facilitate as is probable his retreat from that capital by means of that same road by which he had been now seven months entered, he was told that the Mexicans were willing to capitulate; and, in order to hear their propositions, he returned in haste to the quarters with the cavalry, leaving the infantry to guard the bridges. The Mexicans intimated that they were ready to desist from all hostilities; but, that the capitulation might take place, it was necessary to have the high-priest, who had been made prisoner by the Spaniards when they made the assault upon the temple: Cortes set him at liberty, and a suspension of arms took place. This appears to have been a mere stratagem of the electors to recover the chief of their religion, for whose person they had occasion to anoint the new king whom they had chosen, or were going now to choose; for Cortes had hardly obtained a cessation of arms, when some Tlascalans arrived with the news that the Mexicans had retaken the bridges and killed some Spaniards, and that a great body of warriors were coming against  
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the quarters ; Cortes went immediately to meet them with the cavalry, and making way through them with the utmost difficulty and danger, he recovered the bridges, but whilst he was retaking the last, the Mexicans had again taken the four first, and had begun to draw out the materials with which the ditches had been filled up by the Spaniards. The general returned at length to regain them, and then retired to the quarters with his people, who were now all weary, melancholy, and wounded.

Cortes, in his letter to Charles V. represents the great danger he was in, that day, of losing his life, and ascribes it to particular providence that he escaped from among such a multitude of enemies. It is certain, that from the moment they rose against the Spaniards, they would have been able to have destroyed them with all their allies, if they had observed a better order in fighting, and if there had been more agreement among the inferior officers who led on the attacks ; but they could not agree among themselves, as will appear hereafter, and the populace were merely actuated by their tumultuous fury. On the other hand, it is not to be doubted, that the Spaniards must have appeared to them to have been made of iron ; for they neither yielded to the distress of famine, nor to the necessity of sleep, nor to continual fatigue and wounds ; after having employed all the day in combating with their enemies, they spent the night in burying the dead, curing the wounded, and repairing the damages done to their quarters during the day by the Mexicans, and even in the little time which they allowed for repose, they never quitted their arms, but were always ready to rise before their enemy. But the hardiness of their troops will appear still more extraordinary

ordinary in those terrible engagements which we shall presently relate.

On one of those days, probably the thirtieth of June, died, in the quarters of the Spaniards, the king Montezuma, in the fifty-fourth year of his age, in the eighteenth of his reign, and the seventh month of his imprisonment. With regard to the cause and the circumstances of his death, there is so great a difference and contradiction among historians, it is altogether impossible to ascertain the truth. The Mexican historians blame the Spaniards, and the Spanish historians accuse the Mexicans of it (*k*). We cannot be persuaded that the Spaniards should resolve to take away the life of a king to whom they owed so many benefits, and from whose death they could only expect new misfortunes. His loss was lamented, if we are to credit Bernal Diaz, an eye-witness and most faithful writer, not less by Cortes and every one of his officers and soldiers, than if he had been their father. He shewed them infinite favour and kindness, whether it had been from natural inclination or fear; he always appeared to them to be their friend at heart, at least there is no reason to believe the contrary, nor was it ever known that he spoke like an enemy of them, as they themselves protested.

His good and bad qualities may be gathered from an account of his actions. He was circumspect, magnificent,

(*k*) Cortes and Gomara affirm, that Montezuma died of the blow from the stone with which his people hit him on the head. Solis says his death was occasioned by his not having his wound dressed. Bernal Diaz adds to this omission and neglect, his voluntary abstinence from food. The chronicler Herrera says, that the wound was not mortal, but that he died of a broken heart. Sahagun, and other Mexican historians, affirm, that the Spaniards killed him, and one of them mentions the circumstance of a soldier having pierced him with an eelspear.

cent, liberal, zealous for justice, and grateful for the services of his subjects; but his reserve and distance made the throne inaccessible to the complaints of his people. His magnificence and liberality were supported by the burdens laid on his subjects, and his justice degenerated into cruelty. He was exact and punctual in every thing appertaining to religion, and jealous of the worship of his gods and the observance of rites (1). In his youth he was inclined to war and courageous, and came off conqueror, according to history, in nine battles; but in the last year of his reign, domestic pleasures, the fame of the first victories of the Spaniards, and, above all, superstition, weakened and debased his mind to such a degree, that he appeared, as his subjects reproached him, to have changed his sex. He delighted greatly in music and the chase, and was as dextrous in the use of the bow and arrow as in that of the shooting-tube. He was a person of a good stature, but of an indifferent complexion, and of a long visage, with lively eyes.

He left at his death several sons, of whom three perished that unlucky night of the defeat of the Spaniards, either by the hands of the Spaniards themselves, as the Mexicans affirm, or by the hands of the Mexicans, as the Spaniards report. Of those who survived, the most remarkable was Johualicahuatzin, or Don *Pedro Montezuma*, and of him descended the Counts Montezuma and Tula. Montezuma had this son by Miahuaxochitl, the daughter of Ixtlilcuechahuac, lord of Tollan. By another wife he had Tecuichpotzin, a beautiful princess, from

(1) Solis says that Montezuma *hardly bent his neck*, that is bowed his head to his gods; that he had a higher idea of himself than of them, &c. He adds also, that *the devil favoured him with frequent visits*. Such credulity does not become the greater historiographer of the Indies.



from whom descended the two noble houses of Cano Montezuma and Andreda Montezuma. The Catholic kings granted singular privileges to the posterity of Montezuma, on account of the unparalleled service rendered by that monarch in voluntarily incorporating a kingdom so great and rich as Mexico with the crown of Castile. Neither the repeated importunities made to him by Cortes, nor the continual exhortations of Olmedo, particularly in the last days of his life, were sufficient to prevail upon him to embrace Christianity.

As soon as the king died, Cortes communicated intelligence of his death to the prince Cuitlahuatzin, by means of two illustrious persons who had been present at his death, and a little after he made the royal corpse be carried out by six nobles, attended by several priests, who had likewise been in prison (*m*). The sight of it excited much mourning among the people: the last homage which they pay to their sovereign, extolling his virtues to the stars, whom a short time before they could find possessed of nothing but weaknesses and vice. The nobility, after shedding abundance of tears on the cold body of their unfortunate king, carried it to a place of the city called *Copalco* (*n*), where they burned it with  
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(*m*) Torquemada, and other authors, say, that Montezuma's dead body was thrown into the *Tehuajoc*, along with others; but from the accounts of Cortes and B. Diaz, it is certain that it was carried out of the quarters by the nobles.

(*n*) Herrera conjectures that Montezuma was buried in Chapoltepec, because the Spaniards heard a great mourning towards that quarter. Solis affirms positively, that it was buried in Chapoltepec, and that the sepulchre of the kings was there; but this is totally contrary to the truth, because Chapoltepec was not less than three miles distant from the Spanish quarters: it was therefore impossible that the Spaniards should have overheard the mourning which was made there, especially when they were in the centre of a populous city, and at a time of so much tumult and noise. The kings, besides, had no fixed place of burial; and it is also certain, from the depositions of the Mexicans, that Montezuma's ashes were buried at Copalco.

the usual ceremonies, and buried the ashes with the utmost respect and veneration, although some low illiberal Mexicans treated the ceremony with ridicule and abuse.

Upon this same occasion, if there is any truth in what historians relate, Cortes ordered the dead bodies of Itzquauhtzin lord of Tlatelolco, and other imprisoned lords, of whose names there is no mention, to be thrown out of the quarters into a place called *Tehuajoc*, all of whom had been put to death, as they affirm, by order of Cortes, although none of them assign a reason for such a conduct, which, even if it was just, can never be cleared from the charge of imprudence, as the sight of such slaughter must necessarily have exasperated the anger of the Mexicans, and induced them to suspect that the sovereign likewise had been sacrificed by his command (o). However it was, the people of Tlatelolco carried off the dead body of their chief in a vessel, and celebrated his funeral rites with great lamentation and mourning.

In the mean time, the Mexicans continued their attacks with still more ardour. Cortes, although he made great slaughter of them and came off always conqueror, yet saw that the blood spilt of his own soldiers was a greater loss than the advantages obtained by his victories compensated; and that at last the want of provisions and ammunition, and the multitude of his enemies, would prevail over the bravery of his troops and the superiority of his arms; believing, therefore, the immediate departure of the Spaniards indispensably necessary, he called a council of his captains, to deliberate upon the

(o) Concerning the death of those lords, no mention is made by Cortes, B. Diaz, Gomara, Herrera, and Solis; but Sahagun, Torquemada, Betancourt, and the Mexican historians, report it as certain. In respect to the latter, and the fidelity due to history, we recite the event, though one of great improbability.

the method and time for executing such resolution. Their opinions were different. Some of them said that they ought to depart by day, forcing their way by arms, if the Mexicans opposed them : others thought that they should depart by night ; this was the suggestion of a soldier named Botello, who pretended skill in astrology, to whom Cortes paid more deference than was proper, having been induced to do so by having seen some of his predictions accidentally verified. It was resolved, therefore, the vain observations of that wretched soldier being preferred to the dictates of military skill and prudence, to depart during the night, with all possible secrecy : as if it had been possible to conceal the march of nine thousand men, with their arms, their horses, their artillery, and baggage, from the detection of so numerous and watchful an enemy. They fixed the night of the first of July for their departure (*p*), a night the most unlucky and memorable to the Spaniards, from the great slaughter they suffered, on which account they gave it the name of *noche triste*, by which it is still known in their histories. Cortes ordered a bridge of wood to be made, which could be carried by forty men, to serve for the passing of ditches. He then made all the gold, silver, and gems, which they had hitherto amassed, to be brought out, took the fifth part of it which belonged to the king, and consigned it to the officers belonging to his majesty, declaring the impossibility which he found of preserving and saving it. He left the rest to his officers and

(*p*) B. Diaz says, that the defeat of the Spaniards happened on the night of the tenth of July ; but we believe this to have been a mistake of the printer, as Cortes affirms, that in their retreat, they arrived at Tlascala on the tenth of July ; and from the journal of their march kept by this conqueror, it is evident that their defeat could not have happened on any other day than the first of July.



and foldiers, permitting each of them to take what he pleased ; but at the fame time, he warned them how much fitter it would be to abandon it all to the enemy ; for, when free of that weight, they would find lefs difficulty to fave their lives. Many of them, rather than be difappointed of the principal object of their defires, and the only fruit of their labours, loaded themfelves with that heavy burden, under the weight of which they fell victims at once to their avarice and the revenge of their enemies.

Cortes ordered his march in the greateft filence of the night, which was rendered ftill darker by a cloudy fky, and more troublefome and dangerous by a fmall rain which never ceafed falling. He committed the van guard to the invincible Sandoval, with fome other officers, and two hundred infantry and twenty horfes ; the rear guard to Pedro de Alvarado, with the greater part of the Spanifh troops. In the body of the army the prifoners were conducted, with the fervants and baggage people, where Cortes took alfo his ftation, with five horfes and an hundred infantry, in order to give fpeedy relief wherever it fhould be neceffary. The auxiliary troops of Tlafcala, Chempoalla, and Cholula, which amounted then to more than feven thoufand men, were diftributed among the three divifions of the army. Having firft implored the protection of Heaven, they began to march by the way of Tlacopan. The greateft part of them paffed the firft ditch or canal by the affiftance of the bridge which they carried with them without meeting any other refiftance than the little which the centinels who guarded that poft were able to make ; but the priefts who watched in the temples having perceived their departure, cried loudly “ to arms,” and roused

the people with their horns. In an instant the Spaniards found themselves attacked by water and by land, by an infinity of enemies, who impeded their own attack by their number and confusion. The encounter at the second ditch was most terrible and bloody, the danger extreme, and the efforts of the Spaniards to escape most extraordinary. The deep darkness of the night, the sounds of arms and armour, the threatening clamours of the combatants, the lamentations of the prisoners, and the languid groans of the dying, made impressions both horrid and piteous. Here was heard the voice of a soldier calling earnestly for help from his companions, another imploring in death mercy from Heaven : all was confusion, tumult, wounds, and slaughter. Cortes, like an active feeling general, ran intrepidly here and there, frequently passing and repassing the ditches by swimming, encouraging some of his men, assisting others, and preserving the remains of his harassed little army, at the utmost risk of being killed or made prisoner, in as much order as possible. The second ditch was so filled with dead bodies, that the rear guard passed over the heap. Alvarado, who commanded it, found himself at the third ditch so furiously charged by the enemy, that, not being able to face about to them, nor swim across without evident danger of perishing by their hands, fixed a lance in the bottom of the ditch, grasping the end of it with his hands, and giving an extraordinary spring to his body, he vaulted over the ditch. This leap, considered as a prodigy of agility, obtained to that place the name which it still preserves of *Salto d' Alvarado*, or Alvarado's leap.

The loss sustained by the Mexicans on this unlucky night was unquestionably great : concerning that of the Spa-

Spaniards, authors are, as in other affairs, of various opinions (*q*) ; we are apt to think the computation true which has been made by Gomara, who appears to have made the most diligent enquiries, and to have informed himself both from Cortes and the other conquerors ; that is, there fell, besides four hundred and fifty Spaniards, more than four thousand auxiliaries, and among them, as Cortes says, all the Cholulans ; almost all the prisoners the men and women who were in the service of the Spaniards, were killed (*r*), also forty-six horses ; and all the riches they had amassed, all their artillery, and all the manuscripts belonging to Cortes, containing an account of every thing which had happened to the Spaniards until that period, were lost. Among the Spaniards who were missing, the most considerable persons were, the captains Velasquez de Leon, the intimate friend of Cortes, Amador de Laviz, Francisco Morla, and Francisco de Saucedo, all four, men of great courage and merit. Among the prisoners who were killed was Camatzin, that unfortunate king, and a brother and son, and

(*q*) Cortes says, that one hundred and fifty Spaniards [perished ; but he either designedly lessened the number for particular ends, or there was some mistake made by the copyist or first printer of that letter. B. Diaz numbers eight hundred and seventy to have fallen ; but in this account he includes, not only those who were killed on that unlucky night, but also those who died before he reached Tlascala. Solis reckons only upon two hundred, and Torquemada two hundred and ninety. Concerning the number of auxiliary troops which perished then, Gomara, Herrera, Torquemada, and Betancourt, are agreed. Solis says only, that more than two thousand Tlascalans were missed : but in this he does not agree with the computation made by Cortes, or other authors.

(*r*) Ordaz affirms, that all the prisoners were killed ; but he ought to have excepted Cuicuitzcatzin, whom Cortes had already placed on the throne of Acolhuacan ; because we know from the account of Cortes, that he was one of the prisoners, and on the other hand, it is certain that he was killed afterwards in Tezcuco.



and two daughters of Montezuma (s), and a daughter of prince Maxixcatzin.

In spite of his greatness of soul, Cortes could not check his tears at the sight of such calamity. He sat down upon a stone in Popotla, a village near Tlacopan, not to repose after his toil, but to weep for the loss of his friends and companions. In the midst of so many disasters, however, he had at least the comfort of hearing that his brave captains Sandoval, Alvarado, Olid, Ordaz, Avila, and Lugo, his interpreters Aguilar and Donna Marina, were safe, by means of whom he chiefly trusted to be able to repair his honour and conquer Mexico.

The Spaniards found themselves so dejected and enfeebled with fatigue, and with their wounds, that if the Mexicans had pursued them, not one of them could have escaped with life; but the latter had hardly arrived at the last bridge upon that road, when they returned to their city, either because they were contented with the slaughter already committed, or having found the dead bodies of the king of Acolhuacan, the royal princes of Mexico, and other lords, they were employed in mourning for their death and paying them funeral honours. They would have observed the same conduct with their dead relations or friends; for they left the streets and ditches entirely clean that day, burning all the dead bodies, before they could infect the air by corruption.

At break of day the Spaniards found themselves in Popotla, scattered about, wounded, wearied, and afflicted.

(s) Torquemada affirms, as a well certified point, that Cortes, a few days after he took Cacamatzin, made him be strangled in prison. Cortes, B. Diaz, Betancourt, and others, say that he was killed along with the other prisoners on that memorable night.

ed. Cortes having assembled and formed them in order, marched through the city of Tlacopan, still harassed by some troops of that city and of Azcapozalco, until they came to Otoncalpolco, a temple situated upon the top of a small mountain nine miles to the west of the capital, where at present stands the celebrated sanctuary or temple of the Virgin *de los remedios*, or succour. Here they fortified themselves as well as they could, to defend themselves with the less trouble from the enemy, who continued to annoy them the whole day. At night they reposed a little, and had some refreshment furnished them by the Otomies, who occupied two neighbouring hamlets, and lived impatient under the yoke of the Mexicans. From this place they directed their course towards Tlascala, their only retreat in their misfortunes, through Quauhtitlan, Citlaltepec, Xoloc, and Zacamolco, annoyed all the way by flying troops of the enemy. In Zacamolco they were so famished, and reduced to such distress, that at supper they eat a horse which had been killed that day by the enemy, of which the general himself had his part. The Tlascalans threw themselves upon the earth to eat the herbs of it, praying for assistance from their gods.

The day following, when they had just begun their march by the mountains of Aztaquemecan, they saw at a distance in the plain of Tonan, a little way from the city of Otompan, a numerous and brilliant army, either of Mexicans, as authors generally report, or, as we think probable composed of the troops of Otompan, Calpolalpan, Teotihuacan, and other neighbouring places, assembled at the desire of the Mexicans. Some historians make this army consist of two hundred thousand men, a number computed solely by the eye, and probably increased

creased by their fears. They were persuaded, as Cortes himself attests, that that day was to have been the last of all their lives. This general formed his languid troops, by enlarging the front of his maimed and wretched army, in order that the flanks might be in some manner covered by the small wings of the few cavalry he had left; and with a countenance full of fire he addressed them: “In such a difficult situation are we placed, that it is necessary either to conquer or die! Take courage, Castilians! and trust, that He who has hitherto delivered us from so many dangers, will preserve us also in this!” At length the battle was joined, which was extremely bloody, and lasted upwards of four hours. Cortes seeing his troops diminish and in a great measure discouraged, and the enemy advance still more haughtily notwithstanding the loss they suffered from the Spanish arms, formed a bold and hazardous resolution, by which he gained the victory and put the miserable remains of his army in security. He recollected to have often heard, that the Mexicans went into disorder and fled whenever their general was killed or they had lost their standard. Cihuacatzin, general of that army, clothed in a rich military habit, with a beautiful plume of feathers on his helmet, and a gilded shield upon his arm, was carried in a litter upon the shoulders of some soldiers; the standard which he bore was, according to their usage, a net of gold fixed on the point of a staff, which was firmly tied upon his back, and rose about ten palms above his head (*t*): Cortes observed it in the centre of that great multitude of enemies, and resolved to strike a decisive blow; he commanded his brave captains Sandoval,

(*t*) This sort of standard was called by the Mexicans *Tlabuizmatlaxopilli*.



val, Alvarado, Olid, and Avila, to follow behind, to guard him from attack, and immediately, with others who accompanied him, he pushed forward through that quarter where his attempt appeared most practicable with such impetuosity, that he threw many down with his lance and others with his horse. Thus he advanced through the lines of the enemy, until he came close up with the general, who was accompanied by some of his officers, and with one stroke of his lance extended him on the ground. Juan de Salamanca, a brave foldier, who attended Cortes, dismounting quickly from his horse, put an end to his life, and seizing the plume of feathers on his head presented it to Cortes (*u*). The army of the enemy, as soon as they saw their general killed, and the standard taken, went into confusion and fled. The Spaniards, encouraged by this glorious action of their chief, pursued, and made great slaughter of the fugitives.

This was one of the most famous victories obtained by the Spanish arms in the New World ; Cortes distinguished himself in it above all the rest ; and his captains and soldiers said afterwards, that they had never seen more courage and activity displayed than upon that day ; but he received a severe wound on the head, which daily growing worse, brought his life into the utmost danger. Bernal Diaz justly praises the bravery of Sandoval, and shews how much that gallant officer contributed to this victory, encouraging them all not less by his example than his words. The Spanish historians have also highly celebrated Maria de Estrada, the wife of a Spa-

(\*) Charles V. granted some privileges to Juan de Salamanca, and among others a shield of arms for his house, which had a plume upon it in memory of the one which he had taken from the general Cihuacatzin.

Spanish foldier, who, having armed herself with a lance and shield, ran among the enemy, wounding and killing them with an intrepidity very extraordinary in her sex. Of the Tlascalans, Bernal Diaz says, that they fought like lions, and amongst them Calmecahua, captain of the troops of Maxixcatzin, particularly distinguished himself. He was not, however, less remarkable for his bravery than for his longevity, living to the age of one hundred and thirty years.

The loss of the enemy was undoubtedly great in this defeat, but greatly less than several authors represent it, who make it amount to twenty thousand men; a number rather incredible, according to the miserable state to which the Spaniards were reduced, and the want of artillery and other fire-arms. On the contrary, the loss of the Spaniards was not so small as Solis reports it (\*), for almost all the Tlascalans perished, and many of the Spaniards in proportion to the number of their troops, and all of them came off wounded.

The Spaniards, tired at length with pursuing the fugitives, resumed their march towards Tlascala by the eastern

(\*) Solis, in order to exaggerate the victory of Otompan says, that amongst the troops under Cortes some were wounded, of whom two or three Spaniards died in Tlascala: but this author, solely attentive to the ornament of his style, and the panegyric of his hero, took little note of numbers. He affirms, that Cortes, after the defeat of Narvaez, carried eleven hundred men with him to Mexico, who with other eighty that, according to his account, remained with Alvarado, make eleven hundred and eighty. In the engagements, preceding the defeat of the Spaniards at Mexico, he makes no mention of any death. In the defeat he reckons two hundred only to have been killed; and, in his account of their journey to Tlascala, he speaks of no other but the two or three who died in Tlascala of the wounds they had received at Otompan. Where then are, or how have the other five hundred men and upwards disappeared, which are wanting to make up the number of eleven hundred and eighty. We have a very different idea given us of the battle of Otompan from those who were present at it, as appears from the letters of Cortes, and the History of Bernal Diaz.

eastern part of that plain, remaining that night under the open sky, where the general himself, after the fatigue and wounds he had received, kept guard in person for their greater security. The Spaniards were now not more than four hundred and forty in number. Besides those who had been slain in the engagements, preceding the unfortunate night of their departure from Mexico, there perished during it and the six days following, as Bernal Diaz, an eye-witness affirms, eight hundred and seventy, many of whom having been made prisoners by the Mexicans, were inhumanly sacrificed in the greater temple of the capital.

The next day, the 8th of July, 1520, they entered, making ejaculations to heaven, and returning thanks to the Almighty, into the dominions of Tlascala, and arrived at Huejotlipan (*y*), a considerable city of that republic. They feared still to find some change in the fidelity of the Tlascalans, well knowing how common it is to see men abandoned in their misfortunes by their dearest friends: but they were soon undeceived by meeting with the most sincere demonstrations of esteem and compassion for the disasters they had undergone. The four chiefs of that republic had no sooner intelligence of their arrival, than they came to Huejotlipan to pay their compliments to them, accompanied by one of the principal lords of Huexotzinco, and many of the nobility. The prince Maxixcatzin, though severely afflicted by the death of his daughter, endeavoured to console Cortes with hopes of revenge, which he assured him he might obtain from the courage of the Spaniards and the forces of the republic, which from that time he promised him,

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(*y*) Huejotlipan is called by Cortes and Herrera *Gualipan*, by Bernal Diaz *Gualipar*, and by Solis *Gualipar*.



and all the other chiefs made offers to the same purpose. Cortes returned them thanks for their kind wishes and offers, and laying hold of the standard which he had taken the day before from the Mexican general, he presented it to Maxixcatzin, and gave to the other lords some other valuable spoils. The Tlascalan women conjured Cortes to revenge the death of their sons and relations, and vented their grief in a thousand imprecations against the Mexican nation.

After reposing three days in this place, they proceeded to the capital of the republic, distant about fifteen miles, for the more speedy cure of their wounded, of whom, however, eight soldiers died. The concourse of people at their entry into Tlascala was great, and perhaps greater than when they made their first entry into that city. The reception which Maxixcatzin gave them, and the care he took of them, were becoming his generosity of mind, and demonstrative of the sincerity of his friendship. The Spaniards acknowledged themselves every day more and more obliged to that nation, the friendship of which, by being properly cultivated, proved the most effectual means not only for the conquest of the capital of the Mexican empire, but also of all the provinces which opposed the progress of the Spanish arms, and for the subduing of the barbarous Chichimecas and Otomies, by whom the conquerors were long harassed.

While the Spaniards were reposing after their fatigues and recovering of their wounds in Tlascala, the Mexicans were employed in repairing the evils done to their capital and their kingdom. The losses and injuries which they had sustained in the space of one year, were truly heavy and distressing ; for, besides immense sums  
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of gold and silver, gems, and other precious things, expended partly in presents to the Spaniards, partly in homage to the king of Spain, of which they recovered but little, the fame of their arms was obscured, and the respect of the crown of Mexico diminished; the Totonacas, and other people, had renounced their obedience; all their enemies had grown more insolent; their temples were materially damaged, and their religion spurned at; many houses of the city were totally demolished, and above all other grievances, they had lost their king, several royal personages, and a great part of the nobility. To those reasons for despondence and disgust at the Spaniards, those which were caused by their own civil war were added, for the knowledge of which we are indebted to the manuscripts of a Mexican historian who happened to be at this time in the capital, and survived a few years the ruin of the empire. At the time the Spaniards were so much distressed in the capital by famine from the hostilities of the Mexicans, several lords of the first nobility, either in order to favour the party of the Spaniards, or, what is fully more probable, to give succour to the king, who, by being among them was necessarily an equal sufferer with them, secretly supplied them with provisions, and perhaps, declared themselves openly in their favour, in confidence of their own personal authority. From this cause arose a fatal dissension among the Mexicans, which could not be terminated without the death of many illustrious persons, and particularly some of the sons and brothers of Montezuma, according to the account of the above historian.

The Mexicans found the necessity of placing at the head of their nation a man capable of re-establishing its honour, and repairing the losses suffered in the last year  
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of the reign of Montezuma. A little before, or a little after the defeat of the Spaniards, the prince Cuitlahuatzin was elected king of Mexico. He, as we have said already, was lord of Iztapalapan, the particular counsellor of his brother Montezuma, and Tlachcocalcatl, or general of the army. He was a person of great talents and sagacity, agreeably to the testimony of Cortes, his rival, and liberal and magnificent like his brother. He took great delight in architecture and gardening, as appears from the splendid palace he built in Iztapalapan, and the celebrated garden which he planted there, in whose praises no ancient historian is silent. His bravery and military skill acquired him the highest esteem amongst the Mexicans; and some authors affirm, from particular information of his character, that if he had not met an early death, the capital would never have been taken by the Spaniards (z). It is probable, that the sacrifices made at the festival of his coronation were those Spaniards whom he himself had taken prisoners in the night of their defeat.

As soon as the festival of his coronation was over, he employed himself to remedy the disasters suffered by the  
crown

(z) Solis gives Cuitlahuatzin the name of *Quetlabaca*, and says, that he lived on the throne but a few days, and those were sufficient to make the memory of his name amongst his countrymen be for ever cancelled from his cowardice and insignificance. But this is false, and contrary to the accounts given by Cortes, Bernal Diaz, Gomara, and Torquemada, authors who were better informed than Solis. How could the memory of his name amongst the Mexicans be cancelled, while it was preserved indelibly among the Spaniards, they having considered him as the person who was the cause of their defeat on the first of July, as they themselves testify? Cortes was so mindful of him, and felt so much resentment for those disasters, that when he found he had forces sufficient to undertake the siege of Mexico, being desirous of revenging himself on that king, but not being able to get revenge on his person, he took it upon his favourite city. This was the motive, as Cortes himself says, of his expedition against Iztapalapan.



crown and the empire. He gave orders to repair the damaged temples, and to rebuild the demolished houses, augmented and improved the fortifications of the capital, sent embassies to the different provinces of the empire, encouraging them to the common defence of the state against those hostile strangers, and promised to relieve those who would take up arms in behalf of the crown from all their tributes. He sent also ambassadors to the republic of Tlascala, with a considerable present of fine feathers, habits of cotton, and some salt, who were received with due honour, according to the laws established among the polished nations of that country. The purport of the embassy was to represent to that senate, that although the Mexicans and Tlascalans had hitherto been the inveterate enemies of each other, it was now become necessary to unite themselves together as the inhabitants originally of one country, as people of the same language, and as worshippers of the same deities, against the common enemy of their country and religion; that they had already seen the bloody slaughter which had been committed in Mexico, and other places, the sacrilege to the sanctuaries, and the venerable images of the gods, the ingratitude and perfidy shewn to his brother and predecessor, and the most respectable personages of Anahuac; and, lastly, that insatiable thirst in those strangers for gold, which impelled them to violate every sacred law of friendship; that if the republic continued to favour the perverse designs of such monsters, they would in the end meet with the same recompense which Montezuma had for the humanity with which he received them into his court, and the liberality which he exercised so long towards them: the Tlascalans would be execrated by all nations for giving aid

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to such iniquitous usurpers, and the gods would pour down all the vengeance of their anger upon them for confederating with the enemies of their worship. If, on the contrary, they would as he prayed, declare themselves the enemies of those men who were abhorred by heaven and earth, the court of Mexico would form a perpetual alliance with them, and from that time forward have a free commerce with the republic, by which they would escape the misery to which they had been hitherto subjected: all the nations of Anahuac would acknowledge their obligation to them for so important a service, and the gods, appeased with the blood of those victims, would shower down the necessary rain upon their fields, stamp success upon their arms, and celebrate the name of Tlascala through all that land.

The senate, after having listened to the embassy, and dismissed the ambassadors from the hall of audience, according to their custom, entered into consultation upon that important question. To some among them the proposals of the court of Mexico appeared just and consistent with the security of the republic; they exaggerated the advantages which were offered to them; and, on the other hand, the unlucky issue of the undertaking of the Spaniards in Mexico, and the slaughter made of the Tlascalan troops which had been under their command. Amongst the rest the young Xicotencatl, who had always been the bitter enemy of the Spaniards, raised his voice, and endeavoured, with all the reasons he could urge, to persuade the senate to the Mexican alliance; adding, that it would be much better to preserve the ancient customs of their fathers, than to submit to the new and extravagant policy of that proud and imperious nation; that it would be impossible to find a fitter  
opportunity

opportunity to rid themselves of the Spaniards than then, when they were reduced in number, feeble in strength, and dejected in mind. Maxixcatzin, who, on the contrary, was sincerely attached to the Spaniards, and possessed of more discernment of the laws of nations, also of a disposition more inclined to observe them, arraigned the sentiments of Xicotencatl, charging him with abominable perfidy in counselling the senate to sacrifice to the revenge of the Mexicans, men who had just felt the rod of adversity, and sought an asylum in Tlascala, trusting in the promises and protestations of the senate and the nation. He continued, that if they flattered themselves with receiving the advantages which the Mexicans offered, he on the contrary hoped for greater from the bravery of the Spaniards; that if there was no motive to place confidence in them, they ought still less to confide in the Mexicans, of whose perfidy they had so many examples; lastly, that no crime would be capable of provoking so strongly the anger of the gods, and obscuring the glory of the nation, as such impious treachery to their innocent guests. Xicotencatl pressed his counsel upon the senate, presenting to them an odious picture of the genius and customs of the Spaniards. So great an altercation ensued, and their minds became so much heated, that Maxixcatzin, transported with passion, gave a violent push to Xicotencatl, and threw him down some steps of the audience chamber, calling him a seditious traitor to his country. Such an accusation made by a person so circumpect, so respected and loved by the nation, obliged the senate to imprison Xicotencatl.

The resolution which they came to was, to answer to the embassy that the republic was ready to accept the peace and friendship of the court of Mexico, when it did



did not require so unworthy an act, and a crime so enormous, as the sacrifice of their guests and friends; but when the ambassadors were sought for, to have the answer of the senate delivered to them, it was found they had already departed in secret from Tlascala: for having observed the people a little unquiet upon their arrival, they were afraid that some attempt might have been made against the respect due to their character. It is therefore probable that the senate sent Tlascalan messengers with their answer to the court. The senators endeavoured to conceal from the Spaniards the purport of the embassy, and all that had happened in the senate; but, in spite of their secrecy, Cortes knew it, and with justice thanked Maxixcatzin for his good offices, and engaged to confirm him in the favourable idea he entertained of the bravery and friendship of the Spaniards.

The senate, not content with those proofs of its great fidelity, acknowledged fresh obedience to the Catholic king; and what was still more flattering to their guests, the four chiefs of the republic renounced idolatry, and were baptized, while Cortes and his officers stood their godfathers, and the function was celebrated by Olmedo with great rejoicing and jubilee through all Tlascala.

Cortes was now freed from the danger to which his life was exposed from the blow he had received on his head in the last battle; and the rest of the Spaniards, except a few who died, were cured of their wounds by the assistance of the Tlascalan surgeons. During the time of his sickness, Cortes thought of nothing else than the means he must use to conduct his undertaking of the conquest of Mexico to a prosperous end; and to further this, he had ordered a considerable quantity of timber to be cut for the construction of thirteen brigantines; but  
while

while he was forming those grand projects, many of his soldiers were indulging very different thoughts in their minds. They beheld their number diminished, themselves poor, ill-accoutred, and unfurnished with horses as well as arms. They could not chafe from their thoughts the terrible conflict and tragic night of the first of July, and were unwilling to expose themselves any more to new adventures. Their present ideas, and future apprehensions, were both too much for them; and they blamed their general for his obstinacy in so rash an undertaking. From murmurs in private, they proceeded to make a legal request to him, desirous of prevailing on him, by a variety of arguments, to return to Vera Cruz, where they could procure fresh troops, and a supply of arms and provisions, for the purpose of attempting the conquest with greater hopes, as at present they deemed it impossible. Cortes was much troubled at this alteration of their sentiments, which threatened to frustrate all his designs; but exercising his talent to persuade his soldiers to his own pleasure, he made them a pointed energetic speech, which had effect enough to make them give up their pretensions. He reproached them for that bud of cowardice he saw springing in their minds, awakened their sentiments of honour, by a flattering recital of their glorious actions, and the protestations full of ardor and courage which they had frequently made him. He made them fully sensible how much more difficult it would be for them to return to Vera Cruz than to remain at Tlascala; assured them of the fidelity of that republic, of which they seemed a little doubtful. Lastly, he prayed them to suspend their resolution, until they should see the event of the war, which he designed to make upon the province of Tepejacac, in which he hoped to find new proofs of the sincerity of the Tlascalans.

The lords of the province of Tepejacac, which bordered on the republic of Tlascala, had declared themselves the friends of Cortes, and subjects of the court of Spain, ever since that terrible massacre which the Spaniards had made in Cholula; but seeing afterwards that the Spaniards were worsted, and the Mexicans victorious, they put themselves again under obedience to the king of Mexico; and, in order to conciliate his favour, they killed some Spaniards who were on their journey from Vera Cruz to Mexico, and unapprised of the tragedy which had happened to their companions there; they admitted a Mexican garrison into their territory, and occupied the road which led from Vera Cruz to Tlascala; and, not even contented with that, they made some incursions into the lands of that republic. Cortes proposed to make war upon them, not less to punish their perfidy than to secure the road from that port for the succours he expected from thence. He was instigated also to this expedition by the young Xicotencatl, who had been set at liberty by the mediation of the Spanish general himself, and that he might remove every suspicion against him concerning what had passed in the senate, offered to assist him in that war with a strong army. Cortes accepted his offer; but before he took up arms, he in a friendly manner demanded satisfaction of the Tepejacans, and advised them to quit the Mexican cause, promising to pardon the trespasses they had committed in murdering those Spaniards; but his proposition having been rejected, he marched against them with four hundred and twenty Spaniards and six thousand Tlascalan archers, while Xicotencatl was levying an army of fifty thousand men. In Tzimpontzinco, a city of the republic, so many troops assembled from the states of Huexotzinco, and Cholula,



Cholula, that it was imagined their number amounted to a hundred and fifty thousand.

The first expedition was against Zacatepec, the place of the confederacy of the Tepejacans. The inhabitants of it laid in ambuscade for the Spaniards. They fought on both sides with great courage and obstinacy, but at last the Spaniards were victors, and a considerable number of the enemy left dead on the field (*a*). From thence the army marched against Acatzinco, a city ten miles to the southward of Tepejacac, into which the Spaniards entered triumphant, after gaining a battle little less difficult than that of Zacatepec. From Acatzinco Cortes sent detachments to burn several places in that neighbourhood, and to subject others to his obedience; and when it appeared to be time to attack the principal city, he set out with all his army for Tepejacac, where he entered without any resistance from the citizens. Here he declared many prisoners taken in that province to be slaves, and made the mark of a seal upon them with a hot iron, according to the barbarous custom of that century, allotting the fifth part of them to the king of Spain, and dividing the rest among the Spaniards and the allies. He founded there, according to the manner of speaking of the Spaniards in those days, a city which he called *Segura della Frontera*, the founding of which consisted in establishing Spanish magistrates there, and erecting a small fortification (*b*.)

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(*a*) Several historians say, that the night after the battle of *Zacatepec* the allies of the Spaniards had a great supper of human flesh; part roasted on spits of wood, part boiled in fifty thousand pots. But this appears a complete fable. It is not probable that Cortes, or Bernal Diaz, should have omitted an event in their relations of so remarkable a nature, particularly Diaz, who is generally too prolix and tedious in his recital of such acts of inhumanity.

(*b*) The city of Tepejacac, or Tepeaca, as the Spaniards call it, is still existing; but the name of *Segura della Frontera* was soon forgotten. Charles V.

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The Mexican troops, garrisoned in that province, retreated from it, not having sufficient strength to resist the power of their enemies; but, at the same time, there appeared at the city of Quauhquechollan (*c*), distant about four miles from Tepejacac, towards the south, an army of Mexicans sent there by king Cuitlahuatzin, to hinder the passage of the Spaniards by that quarter to the capital, if they now should attempt it. Quauhquechollan was a considerable city, containing from five to six thousand families, pleasantly situated, and not less fortified by nature than by art. It was naturally defended on one side by a steep rocky mountain, and on another side by two parallel running rivers. The whole of the city was surrounded by a strong wall of stone and lime, about twenty feet high and twelve broad, with a breast-work all round, of about three feet in height. There were but four ways to enter, at those places where the extremities of the wall were doubled, forming two semicircles, as we have already represented in the figure given in our eighth book. The difficulty of the entrance was increased by the elevation of the site of the city, which was almost equal to the height of the wall itself; so that in order to enter, it was necessary to ascend by some very deep steps.

The lord of that city, who was partial to the Spaniards, sent an embassy to Cortes, declaring his submission to the king of Spain, who had been already acknowledged sovereign of all that land, in the celebrated assembly held by king Montezuma with the Mexican nobility, in the presence of Cortes; that, although desirous, he

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gave it the title and honour of Spanish City in 1545. At present, it belongs to the marquisate of the valley.

(*c*) Quauhquechollan is called by the Spaniards Guaquechula, or *Huacachula*. At present, it is a pleasant Indian village, abounding with good fruits.

was not permitted by the Mexicans to manifest his fidelity ; that, then there were a great number of Mexican officers in Quauhquechollan, and thirty thousand men of war partly in that city, partly in the places around it, for the purpose of preventing any confederacy with the Spaniards : nevertheless, he requested him to come to his assistance, and free him from the vexations which he suffered from those troops. Cortes was pleased with the intelligence, and immediately sent with the same messengers a party of thirteen horses, two hundred Spaniards, and thirty thousand auxiliary troops, under the command of captain Olid. The messengers, according to the order of their lord, undertook to conduct the army by a way little travelled, and apprised captain Olid that when they came near to the city, the Quauhquechollans were to attack with some armed bodies the quarters of the Mexican officers, and to endeavour to seize or kill them, in order that when the Spanish army entered the city, it might be easy for them to defeat the enemy without their leaders. But twelve miles before the army reached Quauhquechollan, the Spanish commander became suspicious that the Huexotzincas might be secretly confederated with the Quauhquechollans and the Mexicans, in order to destroy the Spaniards. His suspicion, occasioned by secret information, and rendered still more strong by the numbers of the Huexotzincas, who of their own accord joined the army, obliged him to return to Cholula, where he made some of the most respectable persons among the Huexotzincas and the ambassadors of Quauhquechollan be seized, and sent them under a strong guard to Cortes, that he might make enquiry into this supposed stratagem.

Cortes was extremely vexed at this proceeding against such faithful friends as the Huexotzincas : nevertheless

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he carefully examined them, discovered the innocence and fidelity of both parties, and observed, that the late disasters had made the Spaniards more timorous, and that fear, as usual, had induced them to carry their suspicion farther than was proper or necessary. He gave kind treatment and made presents to the Quauhquechollans and the Huexotzincas; and, accompanied by them, he marched for Cholula, with a hundred Spanish infantry and ten horses, having resolved to execute this enterprize in person. He found the Spaniards in Cholula apprehensive, but he soon encouraged them, and then marched for Quauhquechollan, with all his army, which consisted now of three hundred Spaniards and upwards of a hundred thousand allies: such was the readiness of those people in taking arms to free themselves from the yoke of the Mexicans. Before he arrived at Quauhquechollan, Cortes was informed by the chief of that city, that all the purposed measures had been taken; that the Mexicans were confiding in their centinels posted upon the towers of the city, and on the road; but that the centinels had already been secretly seized and confined by the citizens.

The Quauhquechollans no sooner saw the army which was coming to their assistance, than they attacked the quarters of the Mexican officers with such fury, that, before Cortes entered the city, they presented him forty prisoners. When the general entered, three thousand citizens were assailing the principal dwelling of the Mexicans, who, though greatly inferior in number, defended themselves so bravely that they could not take the house, although they had rendered themselves masters of the terraces. Cortes made the assault, and took it; but in spite of the efforts he made to seize any one of them, from whom he might learn some intelligence of  
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the court, the Mexicans fought with such obstinacy, that they were all killed, and he with difficulty obtained some few particulars from a dying officer. The other Mexicans, who were scattered through the city, fled out precipitately to incorporate themselves with the body of the army, encamped on a high ground which commanded all the environs. They immediately formed in order of battle, entered the city, and began setting fire to the houses. Cortes affirms, that he never saw an army make a more beautiful appearance, on account of the gold and the plumes with which their armour was adorned. The Spaniards defended the city with their cavalry and many thousands of allies, and forced them to retreat to a high and almost inaccessible ground; but being likewise thither pursued by their enemies, they betook themselves to the summit of a very lofty mountain, leaving numbers dead on the field. The conquerors, after having sacked the Mexican camp, returned to the city loaded with spoils.

The army rested three days in Quauhquechollan, and on the fourth marched towards Itzacan (*d*), a city containing from three to four thousand families, situate on the side of a mountain, about ten miles from Quauhquechollan, surrounded by a deep river and a small wall. Its streets were well disposed, and its temples so numerous, that Cortes imagined them, including small and large, to be more than a hundred in number. The air of it is hot, from being situated in a deep valley, shut in by high mountains; and its soil, like that of Quauhquechollan, fertile, and shaded by trees bearing the most beautiful blossoms and excellent fruits. A prince of the royal blood of Mexico governed the state at this time, to whom Montezuma had given it in fief, after having put its lawful lord to death, for some misdemeanor of which

(*d*) Itzacan is called Izucar by the Spaniards.

which we are ignorant ; and there was now in it a garriſon of from five to fix thouſand Mexican troops. All theſe particulars having been communicated to Cortes, he was induced to make an expedition againſt Itzocan. His army was ſo much increaſed, that it amounted, according to his own affirmation, to about the number of a hundred and fifty thouſand men. He ſtormed the city on that ſide where the entry was leaſt difficult. The Itzocaneſe, ſeconded by the royal troops, made at firſt ſome reſiſtance ; but having been at laſt overcome by ſuperiority of force, they went into confuſion, and fled by the oppoſite part of the city : and, having croſſed the river, they raiſed the bridges to prevent the purſuit of the enemy. The Spaniards and the allies, in ſpite of the difficulty of getting acroſs the river, chaſed them four miles, killing ſome, making others priſoners, and ſtriking terror and diſmay to the whole. Cortes, having returned to the city, made all the ſanctuaries be ſet on fire, and by means of ſome priſoners recalled the citizens who were ſcattered through the mountains, and invited them to return without fear to inhabit their houſes. The lord of Itzocan had abſented from the city, and ſet out for Mexico, whenever the army of the enemy came in fight. That was ſufficient to the nobility to declare the ſtate vacant, particularly as in all probability he was not very acceptable to them : on which account they agreed, with the authority and under the protection of Cortes, to give it to a ſon of the lord of Quauhquechollan and a daughter of that lord who was put to death by Montezuma ; and becauſe he was ſtill a youth of few years, his father, his uncle, and two other nobles, were appointed his tutors.

The fame of the victories of the Spaniards ſpread ſuddenly through all the country, and drew the obedience



of many to the Catholic king. Besides Quauhquechollan, Itzacan, and Ocopetlajoccan, a large city at a little distance from the two first, some lords came to pay homage to the crown of Castile, from eight places of Coaixtlahuacan, a part of the great province of Mixtecapan, more than a hundred and twenty miles distant towards the south from the city of Quauhquechollan, courting with emulation the alliance and friendship of such brave strangers.

Cortes, having returned to Tepejacac, made war, by means of his captains, on some cities who had shewn hostilities to the Spaniards. The inhabitants of Xalatzinco, a city at a little distance from the road of Vera Cruz, were conquered by the brave Sandoval, and the principal persons carried prisoners to Cortes, who, upon seeing them humble and penitent, set them at liberty again. Those of Tecamachalco, a city of considerable size, of the Popolocan nation, made a stout resistance; but at last they surrendered, and two thousand of them were made slaves. Against Tochtepec, a large city upon the river Papaloapan, where there was a Mexican garrison, he sent a captain, named Salcedo, with eighty Spaniards, of whom not one returned alive to bring the general the news of their defeat. This loss was sensibly felt by Cortes, and on account of the few Spaniards he then had, was a very heavy one; but, in order to revenge it, he sent two brave captains, Ordaz and Avila, with some horses and two thousand allies against the garrison, who, notwithstanding the great courage with which the Mexicans defended themselves, took the city, and killed a number of the enemy.

The loss of those eighty soldiers was not the only thing which distressed Cortes. Those who a little time before had conjured him to return to Vera Cruz, persisted now

so obstinately in their demand, that he was obliged to grant them permission not to return to Vera Cruz, to wait for some reinforcement, but to Cuba, in order to be at a greater distance from the dangers of war, it appearing a less evil to that judicious and discerning leader to diminish the number of his troops than to keep discontented men, who, by their want of spirit, would relax the courage and damp the minds of the rest; but this loss was quickly and abundantly supplied by a considerable number of soldiers, who arrived with horses, arms, and ammunition, at the port of Vera Cruz; one party being sent by the governor of Cuba to the assistance of Narvaez, the other by the governor of Jamaica, to the expedition of Panuco: who all willingly joined themselves to Cortes, converting those very means, which were employed by his enemies for his ruin, into instruments of his success.

The conquests of the Spaniards, and the number of their allies, so aggrandised their name, and procured such authority to Cortes among those people, that he was the umpire in all their differences, and they repaired to him as if he had been the sovereign lord of all the region, to obtain confirmation of the investiture of vacant states, and in particular those of Cholula and Ocotelolco in Tlascala, both vacant by deaths occasioned by the small-pox. This scourge of the human race, totally unknown hitherto in the new world, was brought there by a Moorish slave belonging to Narvaez. He infected the Chempoallese, and from thence the infection spread through all the Mexican empire, to the irremediable destruction of those nations. Many thousands perished and some places were utterly depopulated. They whose constitution surmounted the violence of the distemper, remained so disfigured and marked with such deep pits in  
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the face, that they raised horror in every person who viewed them. Among other disasters occasioned by this disorder, the death of Cuitlahuatzin, after a reign of three or four months, was most sensibly felt by the Mexicans, and the death of prince Maxixcatzin by the Tlascalans and Spaniards.

The Mexicans chose Quauhtemotzin, nephew of the deceased Cuitlahuatzin, for their king, as no brother of the two last kings was surviving. This was a youth of about twenty-five years, of great spirit; and although not much practised in the art of war, on account of his age, he continued the military dispositions of his predecessor. He married his cousin Tecuichpotzin, daughter of Montezuma, and formerly wife to his uncle Cuitlahuatzin.

The death of Maxixcatzin was greatly lamented by Cortes, as much on account of the particular friendship formed between them, as to him it had been principally owing that there was so much harmony between the Tlascalans and the Spaniards. Having rendered the road of Vera Cruz perfectly secure, and sent the captain Ordaz to the court of Spain, with a distinct account in writing, addressed to Charles V. of all that had hitherto happened; and the captain Avila to the island of Hispaniola, to solicit new succours for the conquest of Mexico, he departed from Tepejacac for Tlascala, entered there, dressed in mourning, and made other demonstrations of grief for the death of his friend the prince. At the request of the Tlascalans themselves, and in the name of the Catholic king, he conferred the vacant state of Ocotelolco, one of the four principal states of that republic, on the son of the late prince, a youth of twelve years, and, in honour of the merits of his



his father, he armed him as a knight according to the custom of Castile.

About this same time, though from a very different cause, the death of the prince Cuicuitzcatzin happened, whom Montezuma and Cortes had placed on the throne of Acolhuacan in the room of his unfortunate brother Cacamatzin. He was not permitted to enjoy long his borrowed dignity, for he who had given him the crown very soon deprived him of his liberty. He departed from Mexico among the other prisoners that night of the defeat of the Spaniards; but he had then the fortune, or perhaps rather misfortune to escape, as he was soon to lose his life in a more ignominious manner. He accompanied the Spaniards in their engagements as far as Tlascalala, where he remained, until having become either impatient of oppression or desirous of recovering the throne, he fled in secret to Tezcucó. At this court his brother Coanacotzin was then reigning, to whom, after the death of Cacamatzin the crown in right belonged. Cuicuitzcatzin had hardly made his appearance when he was made prisoner by the royal ministers, who gave speedy advice to their king of it, who was then absent at Mexico. He communicated it to king Quauhtemotzin his cousin, who considering that fugitive prince a spy of the Spaniards, thought he should be put to death. Coanacotzin, either to please that monarch, or to take away from Cuicuitzcatzin any opportunity of attempting to recover the crown to the prejudice of his own right and the peace of the kingdom, executed that sentence upon him.



